

# EGYPTIAN MYTHOLOGY

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**Gods, Goddesses, and Medicine  
from Ancient Egypt**

By Xena Ronin



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Chapter 1: The Complete List of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses

Let's get started. What did the people believe in in Egyptian society? Whom did they worship? How many gods and goddesses were there? And why were there so many? Well, the last question is simply answered by the fact that polytheism was pretty common in those days. Statues were often made from different materials to represent gods of elements and nature, life and death. Most religions had a deity or female deity of fruitfulness, the underworld, the water, the sea, the wind, the trees, the earth, and all kinds of crafts even had their gods, like, for example, hunting and fishing. Some were in the shapes of animals, and you may have seen some of those in Egyptian statues, like cats and dogs. Others looked a lot like human, or part human.

The male gods and female goddesses of Ancient ancient Egypt were

definitely an important part of the people's everyday lives back then. It isn't unexpected then that there were over 2,000 deities in the Egyptian temple. Some of these godly beings' names are preferred: Isis, Osiris, Horus, Amun, Ra, Hathor, Bastet, Thoth, Anubis, and Ptah while many others less so. The more famous deities became state godly beings while others were associated with a particular region or, in many cases, a ritual or role. The female deity Qebhet, for example, is a little-known deity who offered cool water to the dead spirits as they awaited judgment in the hereafter, and Seshat was the female deity of written words and particular measurements eclipsed by Thoth, the better known deity of writing and customer of scribes.

Ancient Egyptian society grew out of a grasp of these godly beings and the essential role they played in the never-ending journey of every human being. Historian Margaret Bunson writes:

The huge number of gods and goddesses in ancient Egypt were the focal points of the country's cultic rites and personal religious practices. They also played a part in the great mortuary routines and in the Egyptian faith in posthumous immortal happiness.

The deities developed from an animistic faith system to one which was highly anthropomorphic and imbued with magic. Heka was the deity of magic and medication but was also the primitive force, pre-dating all the other gods, who enabled the act of creation and sustained both mortal and godly life. The most vital value of the Egyptian society was ma'at - harmony and stability - represented by the female deity of the same name and her white ostrich feather, and it was Heka who empowered Ma'at just as he did all of the other deities. Heka was the manifestation of heka (magic) which should be comprehended to be natural laws which today would be considered godlike but, to the Egyptians, were simply how the world and the universe operated. The deities provided people with all good gifts, but it was Heka who allowed them to do that.

These deities all had names, individual characters and traits, wore various types of clothes, held different things as holy, commanded their own domains of influence, and reacted in highly individualistic ways to events. Each godly being had their own area of proficiency but were generally connected with some spheres of human life.

Hathor, as an example, was a female deity of music, dancing, and drunkenness but was also comprehended as an old Mother Goddess, also connected with the Milky Way as a godly reflection of the Nile River, and, in her earlier incarnation as Sekhmet, as a destroyer. The female deity Neith was actually a war female deity who ended up being the embodiment of the Mother Goddess, a nurturing figure, to whom the gods would turn to settle their conflicts. Many gods and goddesses, like, for example, Set or Serket, transformed through time to handle other roles and responsibilities.

These modifications were in some cases remarkable, as in case of Set who went from a hero protector-deity to a villain and the world's first murderer. Serket was likely an early Mother Goddess, and her later role as protector against poisonous beings (particularly scorpions) and guardian of women and children shows those traits. Bunson writes:

The Egyptians had no issue with a multitude of gods and they seldom shelved old deities in favor of new ones. Attributes and roles of numerous deities were syncretized to reconcile differing religions, customs, or ideal visions. For political and spiritual reasons, as an example, the Theban deity Amun, who was considered the most powerful godly being in the New Kingdom, was joined with Ra, a sun deity whose cult dated to the starter days of Egypt. Worship of the gods of ancient Egypt progressed gradually as big cults developed on a regional and after that on a nationwide scale.

The following list of the gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt is derived from numerous works on the subject which follow below in the bibliography. Every attempt has been made to produce an extensive listing but small regional deities have been omitted if their role appears uncertain or they were transformed into major gods. When a major deity developed from an earlier minor deity, it isn'ted.

Included here, also, are principles, like, for example, The Field of Reeds or Lily Lake, which were areas in the hereafter related to the gods. The meanings of the god's traits and the roles they played are synthesized for clarity but it should be noted that not every deity noted was comprehended in the exact same way throughout Egypt's long history. Osiris, for example, was likely a fruitfulness deity in

the Predynastic Period of ancient Egypt (c. 6000-3150 BCE) but was already comprehended as the First King by the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) and was the most preferred deity in ancient Egypt during the time of the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE) at the exact same time that Amun was considered King of the Gods. While these developments are sometimes noted right below, the gods are generally defined in the roles they were best known for at the peak of their appeal.

A.

A'ah - An early moon deity who evolved into Iah (also referred to as Yah) and, ultimately, Khonsu.

Aken - Custodian of the boat which ferried living spirits right across Lily Lake to the Field of Reeds in the hereafter. He slept till he was needed by Hraf-Hef, the surly Divine Ferryman. His name only appears in the Book of the Dead.

Aker - The idolized horizon, defender of the eastern and western horizons of the hereafter. He safeguarded the sun barge of Ra as it entered and left the underworld at dusk and dawn.

Am-Heh - A deity in the underworld, "devourer of millions" and "eater of eternity" who lived in a lake of fire.

Amenet (Amentet) - A female deity who welcomed the dead to the hereafter with food and drink. Known as "She of the West", Amenet was the consort of the Divine Ferryman. She resided in a tree near the gateways of the underworld. Daughter of Hathor and Horus.

Ammit (Ammut) - "Devourer of Souls", a female deity with the head of a crocodile, upper body of a leopard, and hindquarters of a hippo. She sat below the scales of justice in the Hall of Truth in the hereafter and feasted on the hearts of those spirits which were not justified by Osiris.

Amun (Amun-Ra) - God of the sun and air. One of the most powerful and famous gods of ancient Egypt, client of the city of Thebes, where he was worshipped as part of the Theban Triad of Amun, Mut, and Khonsu. Supreme king of the gods in some periods, while actually a minor fruitfulness god. By the time of the New Kingdom he was considered the most effective deity in ancient Egypt and his worship verged on monotheism. Other gods were

even considered simple elements of Amun at this time. His priesthood was the most effective in ancient Egypt and the position of God's Partner of Amun, given to royal women, nearly on par with that of the pharaoh.

Amun, Mut, and Khonsu.

Amunhotep (Amenhotep), Son of Hapu - God of healing and knowledge. Together with Hardedef and Imhotep, one of the few people idolized by the Egyptians. He was the royal designer of Amunhotep III (1386-1353 BCE). He was considered so smart that, after death, he ended up being deified. He had a major temple in western Thebes and a healing center at Deir el-Bahri.

Amunet - The female equivalent of Amun, member of the Ogdoad.

Anat - Goddess of fruitfulness, sexuality, love, and war. She was actually from Syria or Canaan. In some texts she is described as the Mother of the Gods while in others she's a virgin and, in still others, sensual and erotic, described as the most stunning goddess. In one version of The Contendings of Horus and Set, she is given as an accompaniment to Set at the recommendation of the female deity Neith, usually corresponded with Aphrodite of Greece, Astarte of Phoenicia, Inanna of Mesopotamia, and Sauska of the Hittites.

Anta - An element of the Mom Goddess Mut worshipped at Tanis as the accompaniment of Amun.

Andjety – The early deity of fruitfulness associated with the city of Busiris (Andjet). His name means "He who is from Andjet" related to the djed symbol. He became absorbed by Osiris and his name became related to that deity.

Anhur (Han-her) - Also called Onuris by the Greeks. God of war and client of the Egyptian army. See Onuris.

Anket (Anukit or Anuket) - Goddess of fruitfulness and the cataract of the Nile River at Aswan.

Anti - A Hawk deity of Upper ancient Egypt at times associated with Anat.

Anubis - God of the dead related to embalming. Child of Nephthys and Osiris, father of Qebhet. Anubis is depicted as a guy with the head of a pet dog or jackal carrying a staff. He guided the dead

spirits to the Hall of Truth and belonged to the ritual of the Weighing of the Heart of the Soul in the hereafter. He was likely the original God of the Dead right before that role was given to Osiris, at which time he was made Osiris' child.

Anuke - A war female deity actually and one of the oldest gods of ancient Egypt, sometimes accompaniment of Anhur, deity of war. She happened associated with Nephthys and, to a lower degree, Isis and is referred to in some texts as their more youthful sister. Early representations show her in fight dress with weapon, but she was changed into a Mom Goddess and nurturing figure. The Greeks associated her with Hestia.

Apedemak - A war deity depicted as a lion, actually thought to be from Nubia.

Apep (Apophis) - Apep, the celestial serpent attacked the sun barge of Ra every night as it made its way through the underworld toward the dawn. Gods and the warranted dead would help Ra fend the serpent off. The ritual referred to as Overthrowing of Apophis was performed in temples to help the gods and left living spirits protect the barge and guarantee the coming of day.

Apis - The Divine Bull worshipped at Memphis as a version of the deity Ptah. One of the earliest deities of ancient Egypt illustrated on the Narmer Scheme (c. 3150 BCE). The Apis Cult was just one of the most essential and long-lived in the history of Egyptian culture.

Arensnuphis - Companion to the female deity Isis and worshipped mostly at her holy site at Philae. He was represented as a lion or a man with a feathered headdress. Originally from Nubia.

Asclepius (Aesculapius) - A deity of healing of the Greeks also worshipped in ancient Egypt at Saqqara and identified with the idolized Imhotep. His sign, potentially stemmed from the deity Heka, was a personnel with a serpent braided about it, associated in the present with healing and the health occupation, referred to as the Rod of Asclepius.

Ash (As) - God of the Libyan desert, a kindly deity who provided the sanctuary for travelers.

Astarte - Phoenician female deity of fruitfulness and sexuality,

usually closely related to Aphrodite of the Greeks, Inanna/Ishtar of Mesopotamia, and Sauska of the Hittites; described as Queen of Heaven. In Egyptian folklore, she's given as an accompaniment to Set, in addition to Anat, by the female deity Neith.

Aten - The sun disk, actually a sun deity who was elevated by pharaoh Akhenaten (1353-1336 BCE) to the position of sole god, developer of the whole universe.

Atum (Ra) - The sun god, supreme lord of the gods, first deity of the Ennead (tribunal of nine gods), creator of the whole universe and human beings. Atum (Ra) is the first godly being who bases on the primitive mound in the midst of mayhem and makes use of the magic forces of Heka to develop all the other gods, human entities, and life in the world.

Auf (Efu-Ra) - An element of Atum (Ra).

B.

Ba'al - Storm deity originally from Phoenicia. His name means "Lord" and his was a major deity in Canaan only worshipped in ancient Egypt in the later period of the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE).

Ba'alat Gebal - Phoenician female deity of the city of Byblos, a protector deity, included into Egyptian worship through her association with papyrus, which originated from Byblos.

Babi (Baba) - He was a potency deity represented as a baboon and representing male sexuality.

Banebdjedet - A fruitfulness/virility deity who appears as a ram or a man with a ram's head, connected with the city of Mendes, ultimately another name for Osiris.

Ba-Pef - God of horror, particularly spiritual fear. His name translates as "that soul". He resided in your home of Woe in the hereafter and was known to affect the king of Egypt. He was never worshipped with a temple but a Cult of Ba-Pef existed to help calm the deity and secure the king.

Bastet (Bast) - The beautiful female deity of cats, women's tricks, childbirth, fruitfulness, and protector of the hearth and home from evil or misery. She was the daughter of Ra and closely connected



with Hathor. Bastet was just one of the most famous godly entities of old Egypt. Women and men revered her similarly and carried talismans of her cult. She was so universally adored that, in 525 BCE, the Persians used the Egyptian devotion to Bastet to their advantage in winning the Battle of Pelusium. They painted pictures of Bastet on their shields and drove animals in front of their army understanding the Egyptians would rather surrender than anger their goddess. She is depicted as a pet cat or a woman with a cat's head, and her major cult center was at Bubastis.

Bastet.

Bat - An early cow female deity associated with fruitfulness and success. She is one of the oldest Egyptian goddesses dating from the early Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). Bat is illustrated as a cow or a woman with cow ears and horns and is most likely the image at the top of the Narmer Combination (c. 3150 BCE) as she was connected with the king's success. She blessed people with success owing to her ability to see both past and future. Eventually, she was taken in by Hathor who handled her traits.

Bennu - An avian deity better called the Bennu Bird, the godlike bird of creation and inspiration for the Greek Phoenix. The Bennu Bird was closely related to Atum, Ra, and Osiris. It was present at the dawn of creation as an element of Atum (Ra) which flew over the primordial waters and woke creation with its cry. Afterwards, it determined what would and would not be included in creation. It was related to Osiris through the imagery of renewal as the bird was closely connected to the sun which died every night and arose again the next early morning.

Bes (Aha or Bisu) - God of childbirth, fruitfulness, sexuality, humor, and war, widely called the Dwarf god. He is one of the most preferred deities in Egyptian history who safeguarded women and children, fended off wicked, and fought for godlike order and justice. He is generally represented as more of a spirit (a 'devil', while not at all in the modern-day comprehension of that word) than a godly being but was worshipped as a deity and included on a number of everyday products in the houses of the Egyptians just like furniture, mirrors, and knife deals with. His consort was Taweret, the hippopotamus female deity of childbirth and fruitfulness. Bes is depicted as a bearded dwarf with large ears,

preferred genital areas, bow-legged, and shaking a rattle. He is always shown in a front-facing position of protection supervising his charges.

Beset - The female aspect of Bes invoked in ritualistic magic. As a protecting god, Bes also warded off dark magic, ghosts, spirits, and devils. His womanly aspect was gotten in touch with to combat these forces.

Buchis - Element of the Ka (life force/astral self) of the deity Montu in the form or shape of a live bull. Illustrated as a bull running.

C.

Cavern Deities - A group of nameless gods who lived in caverns in the underworld and penalized the wicked and helped the living spirits of the justified dead. They are pointed out in Spell 168 of the Egyptian Book of the Dead and are represented as serpents or serpent-like. The spell is commonly referred to as 'Spell of the Twelve Caves' and makes mention of sacrifices which should be left for them. The people of ancient Egypt would leave bowls of sacrifices by caves for them.

Celestial Ferryman (Hraf-haf) - "He Who Looks Behind Him", the surly boatman who ferried the spirits of the justified dead right across Lily Lake to the shores of paradise in the Field of Reeds. Hraf-haf was rude and unpleasant, and the spirit had to find some way to be polite in reaction in order to reach paradise. Hraf-haf is illustrated as a guy in a boat with his head facing behind him.

D.

Dedun - A protector deity of resources, particularly of products coming from Nubia. Initially a Nubian deity.

Denwen - A serpent godly being in the form or shape of a dragon surrounded by flames. He held power over fire and was strong enough to destroy the gods. In the Pyramid Texts, he tries to kill all of the gods with his breath of fire but is overpowered by the spirit of the dead king who saves creation.

Duamutef - One of the 4 Sons of Horus, a protector deity of the canopic container including the stomach. He commanded the east, had the form or shape of a jackal, and was supervised by the female deity Neith.

E.

Ennead - The nine deities worshipped at Heliopolis who formed the tribunal in the Osiris Myth: Atum, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, Nephthys, and Set. These nine gods decide whether Set or Horus must rule in the story The Contendings of Horus and Set. They were called The Great Ennead. There was also a Little Ennead venerated at Heliopolis of minor deities.

F.

Fetket - The butler of the sun deity Ra who served him his drinks, patron deity of bartenders.

Field of Offerings - A region of the hereafter devoted to Osiris, located to the west. In some inscriptions it is synonymous with the Field of Reeds.

Field of Reeds - The Egyptian paradise in the hereafter which the spirit was admitted to after passing effectively through judgment and being justified by Osiris. It was a direct reflection of a person's life on earth where one went on to enjoy everything as right before but without sickness, frustration, or the risk of death.

Forty-Two Judges - The Forty-two deities who administered with Osiris, Thoth, and Anubis over the judgment of the spirit in the hereafter. Once the spirit had made the Negative Confessions (Statement of Innocence) the Forty-Two Judges advised Osiris on whether the confession should be accepted. They had names like Far-Strider, Fire-Embracer, Demolisher, Disturber, Owner of Faces, and Snake Who Brings and Gives, among others.

4 Sons of Horus - 4 godly entities, Duamutef, Hapy, Imset, and Qebehsenuef, who monitored the viscera or the dead in the 4 canopic jars positioned in the burial place. Each had his own primary indicate guard, his own inner organ to safeguard, and was monitored by a particular goddess.

G.

Geb - God of the earth and growing things. Geb is the son of Shu and Tefnut, male spouse of Nut, the sky.

Gengen Wer - The celestial goose whose name means "Great Honker". He existed at the dawn of creation and safeguarded (or laid) the celestial egg including the vital force. He is a protector

deity who was worshipped very early in Egypt's history. Followers of Gengen Wer recognized themselves with his protecting traits and wore talismans reminding them to appreciate life and honor the earth.

H.

Ha - A protector god, Lord of the Western Deserts also referred to as Lord of the Libyans. He was deity of the desert to the west of Egypt, child of the deity Iaaaw who was likely also a desert god. Ha provided defense from the Libyans and opened oases for travelers in the desert. Portrayed as a strong young man with the indication of the desert over his head.

Hapi - A fruitfulness god, deity of the Nile silt and associated with the inundation which triggered the river to overflow its banks and deposit the wealthy earth which the farmers count on for their crops. Hapi was a really old deity whose name may have actually been stemmed from the river and who was a personification of the river at flood. He is depicted as a man with large bosoms and stomach symbolizing fruitfulness and success.

Hapy - Also referred to as Hapi, a protector god, one of the Four Sons of Horus who safeguarded the canopic container holding the lungs. He commanded the north, had the form or shape of a baboon, and was supervised by Nephthys.

Hardedef - The son of King Khufu (also referred to as Cheops, 2589-2566 BCE) who wrote a book referred to as Instruction in Knowledge. The work was so brilliant it was considered the work of a deity and he was idolized after death.

Haroeris - The Greek name for the sky aspect of Horus the Elder (also referred to as Horus the Great who appeared in the earthly world as a falcon.

Harpocrates - The Greek and Roman name for Horus the Child, child of Osiris and Isis. Illustrated as a young winged boy with his finger to his lips. He was venerated in Greece as the deity of secrets, silence, and privacy.

Hathor - One of the best known, most preferred, and most vital deities of age-old Egypt. She was the daughter of Ra and, in some stories, partner of Horus the Senior. A really age-old goddess, she

was sent by Ra to destroy mankind for their sins. The other gods implored Ra to stop her damage before no human beings were left to benefit from the lesson. Ra then had a barrel of beer dyed red, to look like blood, and placed at Dendera which Hathor, in her blood lust, drank. She fell asleep and woke as the humane female deity who was a friend to all. She was the customer female deity of joy, motivation, celebration, love, women, women's health, childbirth, and drunkenness. One of her names is "The Lady of Drunkenness". She was thought to live in sycamore trees and so was also referred to as "The Woman of the Sycamore." In the hereafter she helped guide the dead spirits towards paradise and was just one of the godly entities aboard the sun barge of Ra who safeguarded it from Apep. She is more connected with appreciation and a thankful heart. The Greeks associated her with Aphrodite. She is depicted as a cow or a woman with a cow's head and progressed from the earlier female deity Bat. Her characteristics were later mainly soaked up by Isis.

Hathor-Nebet-Hetepet - A Mom Goddess element of Hathor worshipped at Heliopolis. She represented the hand, the active part, of the supreme deity Atum (Ra).

Hatmehit (Hatmehyt) - She was a fish female deity who was worshipped in the Delta area of Mendes. Her name means "Foremost of the Fish". She appeared from the totemic sign of the nome (province) of the area around Mendes, which was a fish.

Haurun - A protector deity related to the Great Sphinx of Giza. He was actually a Canaanite deity connected with destruction who planted a tree of death. When he was brought to ancient Egypt by Canaanite and Syrian workers and merchants, he was changed into a deity of healing. His association with the Sphinx of Giza comes from these foreign workers who actually believed the Sphinx represented Haurun and built a shrine to their deity in front of the statue. He is referred to as "The Triumphant Rancher" for a famous spell recited in his name for protection right before going hunting.

Hedetet - Goddess of scorpions and protectress against their venom, an early version of Serket.

Heh and Hauhet - God and female deity of infinity and eternity. Heh was represented as a frog and Hauhet as a snake. Their names

suggest "endlessness" and they were among the original gods of the Ogdoad.

Heqet (Heket) - Goddess of fruitfulness and childbirth, represented as a frog or woman with the head of a frog.

Heret-Kau - A protective female deity whose name suggests "She Who is Above the Spirits". She was worshipped throughout the period of the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) as a life-giving spirit who also safeguarded the dead spirits in the hereafter. Her nurturing traits were later soaked up by Isis.

Heka - One of the oldest and most crucial deities in old Egypt. He was the customer deity of magic and medication but was also the prehistoric source of power in the universe. He existed right before the gods and was present in the act of creation though, in later myths, he is seen as the child of Menhet and Khnum and part of the triad of Latopolis. He is depicted as a man carrying a staff and knife, and physicians were referred to as Priests of Heka. Magic was an integral part of medical practice in old Egypt, and so Heka became an important godly being for physicians. He was said to have killed two snakes and braided them on a personnel as a sign of his power; this image (borrowed from the Sumerians, actually) was passed on to the Greeks who associated it with their deity Hermes and called it the caduceus. In the present, the caduceus is often interchanged with the Rod of Asclepius in iconography related to the medical occupation.

Heryshaf - A fruitfulness deity depicted as a man with the head of a ram. He is an old deity going back to the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE). He was later associated with Atum (Ra) and Osiris who absorbed his traits.

Heset - Goddess of food and drink related to beer and satisfaction. She was an early female deity of ancient Egypt illustrated as a cow with a tray of food on her horns and milk flowing easily from her udders. Beer was described as "the milk of Heset". She was later absorbed into Hathor. She belonged to the Triad of Heliopolis along with Mnevis and Anubis.

Hetepes-Sekhus - A personification of the Eye of Ra who looks like a cobra female deity in the hereafter and destroys the nemeses of

Osiris. She is depicted in the company of crocodiles.

Horus - An early avian deity who turned into one of the most crucial godly beings in age-old Egypt. Related to the sun, sky, and power, Horus ended up being linked with the king of ancient Egypt as early as the First Dynasty (c. 3150-2890 BCE). While the name 'Horus' may describe certain avian deities it principally designates two: Horus the Senior, one of the first five deities born at the start of creation, and Horus the Younger who was the son of Osiris and Isis. Following the arise in appeal of the Osiris Myth, Horus the Younger became one of the most crucial deities in Egypt. In the story, after Osiris is murdered by his brother Set, Horus is raised by his mother in the Delta swamps. When he matures he fights his uncle for the kingdom and wins, restoring order to the land. The kings of Egypt, with some exceptions, all linked themselves with Horus in life and with Osiris in death. The king was thought to be the living version of Horus and, through him, the deity gave all good things to his people. He is generally illustrated as a guy with the head of a hawk but is represented by several images. His signs are the Eye of Horus and the hawk.

Hu - God of the spoken word, personification of the first word spoken by Atum (Ra) at the dawn of creation which brought all into being. Related to Sia and Heka. Sia represented the heart, Hu the tongue, and Heka their underlying force which gave them their power. Hu is generally viewed as a depiction of the power of Heka or Atum and is illustrated in funerary texts guiding the spirit to the hereafter.

I.

Iah (Yah) - A deity of the moon who figures prominently in the Egyptian calendar. In the story of the creation of the world, Atum is angered by the intimate relationship between Geb (earth) and Nut (sky) and so separates them, declaring that Nut might not bring to life her kids on any day of the year. The deity Thoth appeared and gambled with Iah for 5 days worth of moonlight. He won and divided the moonlight hours into days which, as they were not part of the days of the year decreed by Atum, Nut could give birth in. She then brought to life the first five gods: Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus the Elder in July. The Egyptians controlled their calendar with these five magic days. Iah was eventually taken

in into the deity Khonsu.

Iabet - Goddess of fruitfulness and renewal, referred to as "She of the East" and at times connected with Amenet ("She of the West"). Iabet presided over the eastern deserts and, in time, came to personify them. She was also referred to as "Cleanser of Ra" who bathed the sun right before it appeared in the dawn sky and personified the freshness of the morning sun. She was ultimately taken in into Isis.

Ihy - God of music and delight, particularly the music of the sistrum. Son of Hathor and Horus the Elder. He was worshipped with Hathor at Dendera and invoked at celebrations. His birth is honored in wall engravings at birth homes in Dendera in the faith that happiness and music should welcome children to earth at their birth. Illustrated as a child with a sistrum.

Imhotep - The vizier of king Djoser (c. 2670 BCE) who created and built the Step Pyramid. He lived c. 2667-2600 BCE and was a polymath expert in lots of disciplines. His name suggests "He Who Comes in Peace" and, after his death, he was idolized as a deity of wisdom and medication. He was identified by the Greeks with Aesculapius and was conjured up in spells for healing. His medical writings claimed, against conventional faith, that illness was natural in beginning and not a penalty from the gods.

Imsety - A protector god, one of the Four Sons of Horus who safeguarded the canopic container holding the liver. He presided over the south, had the form or shape of a human male, and was watched over by Isis.

Ipy - A Mother Goddess associated in some texts with the mom of Osiris, also referred to as Opet and "The Great Opet". She is depicted as a hippopotamus or a mix of hippo, crocodile, human woman, and lion, usually with a lion's head, hippo's body, human arms, lion feet. She was referred to as "Mistress of Magical Security" and is first referenced in the Pyramid Texts as securing and nurturing the king.

Ishtar - The Mesopotamian female deity of love, sexuality, and war. She was actually Inanna of the Sumerians and Akkadians, who became Ishtar to the Assyrians and influenced the development of



other similar goddesses like, for example, Aphrodite of the Greeks, Astarte of the Phoenicians, Hathor of the Egyptians, and Sauska of the Hittites, to name a few. She was likely first introduced to ancient Egypt through trade in the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) but certainly acquired prominent standing after the Assyrian conquest of ancient Egypt by Ashurbanipal in 666 BCE.

Isis - The most powerful and famous female deity in Egyptian history. She was related to virtually every aspect of human life and, in time, ended up being raised to the position of supreme godly being, "Mom of the Gods", who took care of her fellow godly entities as she did for humans. She is the second-born of the First Five Gods (Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus the Senior), sister-female spouse of Osiris, mom of Horus the Younger, and symbolically understood as the mom of every king. Her Egyptian name, Eset, suggests "Goddess of the Throne" just because of her association with the queen. She was also referred to as Weret-Kekau, "The Great Magic", just because of her amazing powers. She took care of people in life and appeared to them after death to help guide them safely to paradise. After the conquest of ancient Egypt by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE, her worship traveled to Greece and after that to Rome. During the time of the Roman Empire, she was worshipped in every corner of their world from Britain through Europe to Anatolia. The Cult of Isis was the strongest challenger of the new faith of Christianity between the 4th-6th centuries CE, and iconography, and also tenets of faith, of the Isis cult were incorporated into the new faith. Images of the Virgin Mary holding her child Jesus comes straight from Isis cradling her child Horus and the Dying and Reviving God figure of Jesus himself is a version of Osiris.

Isis Figurine.

Isis-Eutheria - A later on Greek variation of Isis worshipped in ancient Egypt whose tears, when she mourned for Osiris, were thought to cause the inundation of the Nile River.

Iusaaset - A very early Mom Goddess referred to as "Grandmother of the Gods" and linked to Atum at the creation of the world. She is illustrated in the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) as lady with the uraeus and solar disc on her head holding a scepter and the ankh, symbol of life, and was connected with the acacia tree,

the Tree of Life, considered the oldest tree in Egypt. She was referred to as "Girl of the Acacia", an epithet later attributed to Hathor. She was known to the Greeks as Saosis.

Iw - A creation female deity worshipped at Heliopolis related to Hathor and Atum, combining the traits of Hathor, Nebet, and Hetepet.

J.

Judgement Deities - See Forty-Two Judges.

Jupiter-Amun - The Roman variation of Zeus-Amun, king of the gods, worshipped at the Siwa Oasis in Egypt.

K.

Kabechet (Kebhwet or Qebhet) - She was originally a celestial snake deity who ended up being called the daughter of Anubis and a funerary deity. She provided pure, cool water to the spirits of the deceased as they awaited judgment in the Hall of Truth. She was associated with Nephthys as a good friend of the dead.

Kagemni - A vizier to the king Sneferu (c. 2613-2589 BCE) who wrote the wisdom text referred to as Instructions of Kagemni. The book was considered so crucial it was required direction for children of the monarchy. He was idolized after death and worshipped as a deity of wisdom.

Kek and Kauket - Gods of obscurity and night, members of the original Ogdoad of Hermopolis. Kek and Kauket were the male/female elements of darkness but not in any way related to evil. Kek was the deity of the hours right before dawn and was referred to as "Bringer-in-of-the-Light" as he guided the sun barge of the deity Ra toward the sky from the underworld. Kauket, his feminine stability, was represented as woman with the head of a serpent also called "Bringer-in-of-the-Darkness" who presided over the hours of golden when the sun was setting and guided the sun barge into the underworld.

Khentekhtai (Khente-Khtai) - He was a crocodile deity worshipped in the Fourth Dynasty (c. 2613-2498 BCE) at the city of Athribis. His name and protective traits were later absorbed by Horus.

Khentiamenti (Khentiamentiu) - A fruitfulness deity of Abydos who

ended up being a funerary god. His name means "First of the Westerners" (also given as "Foremost of the Westerners") in reference to his role as a deity of the dead (associated with the west). His name and traits were later taken in by Osiris.

Khenmu (Khnum) - Also referred to as "The Great Potter", Khenmu was an early deity of Upper ancient Egypt most likely from Nubia originally. In early myths, he was the deity who fashioned humans from the clay of the Nile River and then held them high so the light of Ra could shine on them and provide life. Humans were then put in a womb from which they were born upon earth. Khenmu is represented as a ram-headed deity representing potency and fruitfulness. He formed a triad with the deities Anuket and Satis at Elephantine on the Egyptian border of Nubia. Linked to the deity Kherty, another ram-headed god, while an entirely different entity. He is the client deity of potters and the ones who work in ceramics.

Khepri - An aspect of Ra the sun deity in his early morning form, represented by the scarab beetle.

Kherty (Cherti) - He was a ram-headed deity of the underworld who ferried the dead on their last journey into the hereafter. In the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) he was said to rule the hereafter with Osiris. Kherty reigned over the entrance and hallways leading to the Hall of Truth while Osiris had reign over the Hall and the Field of Reeds. The dead were greeted by other deities when they showed up in the hereafter and were then given the Hall of Truth for judgment by Kherty. In this role he was benevolent but some inscriptions suggest he was an opponent of order who threatened the deceased king on his entryway to the underworld. Conversely, he is also represented as protecting the king.

Khonsu (Kons, Chonsu, Khensu, or Chons) - His name means "The Tourist" and he was deity of the moon. He formed one of the most essential and influential triads at Thebes together with his dad Amun and mother Mut. He is depicted as a mummy holding the scoundrel and flail with a uraeus and moon disc on his head. Khonsu changed the earlier deity Montu as child of Mut and also took on his protective traits. By the time of the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE) he was extremely famous and worshipped as the greatest amongst the deities after Amun. He was associated with healing and images of Khonsu were really believed to have

miraculous capabilities to heal the sick instantly.

L.

Woman of the Acacia - One of the names of the female deity Iusaaset, "Grandma of the Gods", later given to Hathor.

Girl of the Sycamore - One of the names of Hathor who was really believed to live in the sycamore tree which was holy to her cult.

Lake of Flowers (Lily Lake) - The body of water in the hereafter which the spirits of the justified dead crossed to reach paradise in the Field of Reeds. In the Book of the Dead, the warranted spirits are said to be able to swim and enjoy themselves by the coasts of the lake.

Lates-Fish - The Nile perch holy to the female deity Neith, worshipped as a godly entity as Esna.

M.

Maahes (Mahes, Mihos, or Mysis) - He was a powerful solar deity and protector of the innocent illustrated as a lion-headed man carrying a long knife or a lion. His name is linked to the female deity of harmony and truth, Ma'at, and might mean "True Before Ma'at". This analysis is very likely as his other names consist of "Lord of Slaughter" and "The Scarlet Lord" describing his penalty of the ones that breached the spiritual order life presided over by the goddess. He was generally understood to be the son of Bastet but is also described as son of Sekhmet, only natural since both were related to cats/lions. He perhaps an element of the deity Nefertum, also a son of Bastet, and formed a triad with Nefertum and Imhotep at Memphis. Linked by the Greeks with the Furies because of his vengeful nature.

Ma'at - Goddess of truth, justice, and harmony, one of the most vital deities in the Egyptian temple. She set the stars in the sky and controlled the times. Ma'at embodied the principle of ma'at (consistency) which was crucial to the society of ancient Egypt. Ma'at walked with one through life, was present in the form or shape of the Plume of Truth at the soul's judgment after death, and went on as an existence in the paradise of the Field of Reeds. She is depicted as woman wearing a crown with an ostrich plume. The word means "that which is straight" and the actual idea of

consistency infused every aspect of an Egyptian's life. There is a time for every action and aspect of existence within ma'at but all must be acknowledged and acted upon at appropriate times.

**Mafdet (Mefdet)** - She was an early female deity of justice who pronounced judgment and meted out execution promptly. Her name means "She Who Runs" for the speed with which she dispensed justice. She is the earliest feline godly being in Egypt, pre-dating both Bastet and Sekhmet. She safeguarded people from poisonous bites, particularly from scorpions, and precedes Serket who later took on that role. All of Mafdet's traits were later presumed by other female deities but Mafdet remained a preferred female deity from the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) through the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE) when she looks like a judge in the hereafter. She is depicted as woman with the head of a cat, cheetah, leopard, or lynx holding the rope and executioner's blade.

**Mandulis (Marul or Merwel)** - A Nubian solar deity worshipped by Egyptians at Philae and Kalabsha, both in far Upper ancient Egypt near the Nubian border. The first temple to him was constructed at Kalabsha throughout the 18th Dynasty (c. 1550-1292 BCE). He was related to both Ra and Horus and is illustrated as a falcon wearing a horned headdress (the hemhem crown) or a human wearing the same crown with serpents. In his association with Ra he appeared as a child, signifying the early morning sun, and as an adult representing later day.

**Mau** - The godly cat who, in some stories, is present at the dawn of creation as an aspect of Ra. Mau safeguarded the Tree of Life, which held the tricks of immortality and godlike knowledge, from the evil serpent Apep. The story of Mau and the tree is told in Spell 17 of the Egyptian Book of the Dead where it is clear the cat is Ra personified. Spell 17 also claims that this is the beginning of cats on earth.

**Mehen** - The serpent deity who wrapped himself around Ra in the sun barge to protect him from Apep's attacks. In early myths he is shown securing Ra while Set combat the serpent.

**Mehet-Weret** - An old sky female deity and one of the oldest godly entities of Egypt. She is the celestial cow female deity who rose from the primitive waters of chaos to bring to life the sun deity Ra

at the start of time. Her name means "Great Flood" in Egyptian, and she is connected with fruitfulness and abundance. After giving birth to the sun, she placed it between her horns and every morning lifted it into the sky. Her traits were later absorbed by Hathor.

Mehit (Meyht) - She was a moon female deity from the Early Dynastic Period (c. 31250-2613 BCE) identified with the principle of the Distant Goddess who leaves from Ra and returns to bring transformation. Usually illustrated as a reclining lioness with three sticks extending from behind her. Accompaniment of Anhur.

Mekhit - Goddess of war, likely actually from Nubia, illustrated as a roaring lioness and related to the moon. She symbolized the vengeful aspect of the Eye of Ra. In one myth, the Eye of Ra departs for Nubia where it changes itself into a lioness. The deity Onuris hunts it down and returns it to Ra where it becomes (or gives birth to) Menhit who then becomes consort to Onuris. She was worshipped at Abydos in the cult center honoring her and Onuris. The story of Menhit, Onuris, and the Eye of Ra is an example of the Distant Goddess theme where the eye leaves Ra and returns or is returned, bringing transformation.

Menhit (Menhyt) - She was a solar godly being who represented the eyebrow of the sun deity Ra, depicted as a reclining lioness. She was worshipped in the Delta region and connected with Neith and Wadjet as a protective goddess.

Meretseger - A protector female deity in the form or shape of a cobra venerated at Thebes. Particularly, she safeguarded the necropolis of the Valley of the Kings.

Merit - The female deity of music who helped to establish cosmic order through musical means. She was a minor female deity who was ultimately absolutely eclipsed by Hathor in regard to music. Hathor ended up being connected with the sistrum particularly and music normally but, earlier, Benefit was the female deity who "performed" the symphony of order which accompanied creation.

Meskheneit - Goddess of giving birth and one of the oldest gods of ancient Egypt. Meskheneit was present at one's birth, created someone's ka (aspect of the soul) and breathed it into someone's body. In doing so, she provided the person's fate through their

character. She was also present at the judgment of the spirit in the hereafter as a comforter and so was with an individual at birth, through life, and after death. She is represented as a birthing brick (the stone women would squat on to deliver) with the head of lady or a seated woman with a birth brick on her head. Her role of providing one's fate was ultimately taken control of by the Seven Hathors but she went on to be venerated in houses throughout Egypt's history.

Mestjet - A lion-headed female deity worshipped at Abydos as one of the many aspects of the Eye of Ra. She undoubtedly was featured in stories of the Distant Goddess, as godly beings related to the Eye of Ra generally are, but no stories have been found thus far. She is only known from a single stela at Abydos which shows her standing with the ankh in one hand and a personnel in the other as lady and her daughter technique to pay her tribute.

Min - An ancient fruitfulness deity from the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). Min was deity of the eastern deserts who watched over travelers but was also related to the black fertile mud of the Egyptian Delta. He is revealed as the partner of Isis and father of Horus in early inscriptions and so is associated with Osiris. Min is depicted as a guy holding his erect penis in one hand with the flail of authority in the other.

Mnevis (Mer-Wer or Nem-Wer) - Mnevis was the holy bull of Heliopolis considered an element of the sun deity Ra. He was a live bull selected from a herd for his totally black coat. Only one Mnevis bull could exist at any one time and another was chosen only after the first died. He was eventually absorbed into Apis.

Montu - A falcon deity who rose to prominence in the 11th Dynasty at Thebes (c. 2060-1991 BCE). His name was taken by all 3 rulers of the dynasty in the form or shape of Mentuhotep (Montuhotep) meaning "Montu is Pleased". He ultimately became connected with Ra as the composite sun deity Mont-Ra and was associated with Horus as a war god. The Greeks corresponded him with Apollo.

Mut - An early mom female deity who more than likely had a minor role during the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) but who later became prominent as the female spouse of Amun and mom of Khonsu, part of the Theban Triad. Mut was a protector godly being

related to Bastet and Sekhmet. She guarded over people in life and, in Spell 164 of the Book of the Dead, is illustrated as a rescuer of living spirits caught by demons in the hereafter. She was also the godly guardian of the monarch and state who roasted plotters and traitors in her flaming brazier.

N.

Nebethetpet - A female deity worshipped at Heliopolis as the personification of the hand of Atum, the active, feminine principle of the god.

Nefertum (Nefertem) - God of good smells and sweet aromas. Nefertum was born from the bud of the blue lotus flower at the dawn of creation and was actually an aspect of Atum. His name means "Gorgeous Atum". He was later considered his own godly being and ended up being connected with fragrant flowers. He is related to renewal and change through his link to the sun deity and flowers. In Egyptian medication he was hired for healing fragrances to treat disease and related to incense.

Nehebkau (Nehebu-Kau) - "He Who Joins the Ka", was a protector deity who joined the ka (element of the soul) to the body at birth and unified the ka with the ba (winged element of the soul) after death. He is illustrated as a snake and, like Heka, has always existed. Nehebkau swam in the prehistoric waters at the dawn of creation right before Atum rose up from the mayhem to enforce order.

Nehmetawy - A protector female deity whose name means "She Who Embraces Those in Need". She was worshipped at Hermopolis where she was considered the marriage partner of Nehebkau. In other areas, she was the accompaniment of the deity of wisdom and writing, Thoth.

Neith - Among the oldest and most enduring godly beings of age-old Egypt, worshipped from the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) through the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), the last to rule ancient Egypt before it was taken by Rome. Neith was a war goddess, creator goddess, mother goddess, and funerary female deity in her time and customer of the city of Sais in the Nile Delta. She was the most vital female deity of Lower ancient Egypt in early history and went on to hold a prominent position in praise for



millenia. In early representations she's seen with a bow and arrows and one of her epithets was "Girlfriend of the Bow". As a developer female deity she was related to the waters of turmoil (Nun) prior to creation and, in this role, she's called "Grandmother of the Gods" or "Mom of the Gods". She was thought to have created birth and was carefully associated with living and growing things. As a mother goddess, she is the conciliator of the gods' disagreements, most famously as the female deity who settles the question of whether Horus or Set should rule ancient Egypt when the tribunal of the gods cannot decide. She also ended up being preferred as a funerary female deity who watched over the dead. Her statue appears with those of Isis, Nephthys, and Serket in Tutankhamun's burial place. She is the defender female deity over Duamutef, one of the 4 Sons of Horus who supervise the canopic containers in the burial places and is also illustrated as a just judge of the dead in the Hall of Truth.

Nekhbet - A protector female deity in the form or shape of a vulture who secured Upper Egypt. She was related to Wadjet, protector of Lower Egypt. The two are referred to as "The Two Woman".

Nekhenty - A protector deity in the form or shape of a falcon who was customer of the town of Nekhen in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). His traits were ultimately absorbed by Horus.

Neper - God of the grains, child of the harvest female deity Renenutet. He was a personification of corn and associated with Osiris as a fruitfulness god. Neper predates Osiris and may have been one of the earlier deities who prefigure the Osiris Myth. Casket Text II.95 describes him as the deity "living after he has passed away" and engravings relate him with the Perishing and Restoring God figure before Osiris' preferredity.

Nephthys - A funerary goddess, one of the first five gods born of Geb and Nut after the creation of the world, female spouse of Set, twin sister of Isis, and mom of Anubis. Her name means "Mistress of the Temple Enclosure" or "Mistress of the House" describing a heavenly home or temple. She is illustrated as lady with a house on her head. Nephthys is widely, and improperly, considered a minor godly being when actually she was worshipped throughout ancient Egypt from the earliest periods to the last dynasty to rule Egypt. She was considered the dark female deity to the light of Isis but this

brought no negative association, only stability. Nephthys functions plainly in the Osiris myth when she transforms herself into the form or shape of Isis to seduce Osiris, when she betrays the place of Osiris' body to Set, and when she helps her sister revive the dead king. She was called "Good friend of the Dead" for her care of the spirits in the hereafter and expert mourners at funeral services, who motivated the open expression of sorrow, were called the "Kites of Nephthys". In the text The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys she calls the spirit of Osiris back from the dead. This text was recited regularly at festivals, services, and funerals throughout Egypt.

Nephthys Amulet.

Nu (Nun) and Naunet - Nu was the personification of the primitive mayhem from which the world arose. Naunet is his female aspect and accompaniment. Nu is commonly regarded as "Father of the Gods" while Naunet is only referenced regarding the Ogdoad, the grouping of eight primitive gods, 4 males matching 4 women, who represent the original elements of creation. In some later myths, the female deity Neith is connected with Nu.

Nut - The primitive sky female deity who personified the canopy of the paradises, spouse of Geb (earth), mom of Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus the Senior citizen. After the prehistoric mound arose from the waters of mayhem at creation, Atum (Ra) sent his kids Shu and Tefnut out to create the world. When they returned, he was so happy he shed tears of joy which ended up being human beings. These beings had nowhere at all to live and so Shu and Tefnut mated to bring to life Geb (earth) and Nut (sky). Their relationship was so intimate that it disrupted Atum who pushed Nut high above Geb and repaired her there. He also decreed that she could not give birth on any day of the year. Thoth, the deity of wisdom, bet with Iah, deity of the moon, and won 5 days worth of moonlight which he changed into days. Nut was able to then bring to life her five children on five consecutive days in July which were not part of Atum's original. In some versions of the story it is Khonsu who loses the gamble with Thoth.

O.

Ogdoad - The 8 deities representing primitive aspects of creation: Nu and Naunet (water); Heh and Hauhet (infinity); Kek and Kauket (darkness); Amun and Amaunet (hiddenness, obscurity). The idea of

stability, so essential to Egyptian culture, was exemplified in the different ogdoads of Egyptian gods/sprits of place.

Onuris (Anhur) - He was a deity of war and hunting. His name means "He Who Restores The Distant One" which is a reference to the story about his retrieval of the Eye of Ra from Nubia. In this tale, the Eye of Ra goes forth from ancient Egypt and changes itself into a lion. Onuris hunts the lion, records it, and returns it to Ra where it transforms into the female deity Mekhit who then becomes his consort. This story is an example of the Distant Goddess motif in which the Eye of Ra leaves from the sun deity and after that is returned (or returns itself) bringing transformation. Onuris was considered a son of Ra and associated with the deity Shu. His image (as Anhur) appeared on the banners of the Egyptian army as he led them to war, secured them in fight, and brought them securely home. He was the patron deity of the Egyptian army and of hunters.

Osiris - Lord and judge of the dead, one of the First Five deities born of Nut at the dawn of creation, and one of the most preferred and long-lasting gods of Egypt. His name means "Effective" or "Mighty". Osiris was actually a fruitfulness deity who grew in preferdity and influence through the Osiris Myth in which he's killed by his brother, Set, resuscitated by his spouse Isis, dad's sky deity Horus, and comes down to the underworld as Judge of the Dead. In the Egyptian Book of the Dead he is pointed out regularly as the just judge in the Hall of Truth who weighs the hearts of the dead spirits against the white plume of ma'at. He is an early example of the Dying and Reviving God figure in mythology who leant himself to the later version of this figure, Jesus Christ. Egyptian kings identified themselves with Osiris in death and he's usually represented as a mummy (representing death) and with green or black skin (representing the fruitfulness of the Nile area and life). He was so famous that people in age-old ancient Egypt paid to have their bodies buried at Abydos near his cult center and the ones who could not pay for that would pay for memorials to be set up to them or their loved ones at Abydos believing that proximity to Osiris on earth guaranteed easier access to paradise after death. His cult naturally combined with that of his spouse and the Cult of Isis, with its importance of redemption, immortality, the dying and reviving god, and the godly son born of a virgin mom, would later influence the development of early Christianity.

Egyptian God Osiris.

Osiris-Apis - The Apis bull, generally associated with the deity Ptah, ended up being linked to Osiris as the latter deity grew more preferred. At Saqqara, the priests began to praise a hybrid deity they called Osiris-Apis who was the deity in bull form. As with the traditional Apis bull, a live bull was considered an incarnation of the god. When the holy bull died it was mummified with the exact same care given a king.

P.

Pakhet - A hunting female deity in lioness form, her name means "She Who Scratches" or "Tearer". She was an accompaniment of Horus and related to the vengeful aspects of Sekhmet and the justice of Isis. She was thought to hunt in the evening and terrify her opponents.

Panebtawy - The child god, personification of the king as godlike child of Horus and also of Horus as a kid. He was illustrated as a young kid with his finger to his lips, prefiguring the later image of Harpocrates, the Greek version of the kid Horus. His name means "Lord of the Two Lands". He was the child of Tasenetnofret, a local female deity of Kom Ombo who was a symptom of Hathor.

Pataikos - Minor amuletic deities who represented the power of the deity Ptah. They were represented as dwarf-gods and worn for protection.

Peak - Called "Peak of the West", the personification of the highest peak of the cliffs which overshadowed the Valley of the Kings and worshipped by the workers at Deir el-Medina as a protecting power.

Peteese and Pihor - Two human brothers referred to as "the sons of Kuper" who drowned in the Nile River near Dendur. They were idolized for their association with Osiris, coming from their death in the river, and acted as regional godly beings of protection. Augustus Caesar built a temple in their honor at Dendur which is now on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The temple's reliefs show the god-brothers offering gifts to Isis.

Ptah - One of the oldest Egyptian deities who appears in the First Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) but likely dates from the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). Ptah was the great deity of

Memphis, creator of the world, lord of truth, and primary deity of the city of Memphis and its surrounding location c. 3000 BCE. Ptah was originally the figure who stood on the primitive mound of the ben-ben at the creation of the world. He was likely an early fruitfulness deity and is related to the moringa tree which, in an early myth, he liked to rest underneath. He was the customer deity of carvers and artisans and contractors of monoliths as he was thought to have shaped the earth. He was sometimes referred to as Ptah-Nun or Ptah-Naunet in his creative element, connecting him with the primordial substances of the Ogdoad. He is depicted as a mummified man wearing a skull cap holding the Was scepter of authority with the ankh and djed signs at the top.

Ptah-hotep - Author of one of the more famous Wisdom Texts, who was idolized after his death and bestowed his own cult.

Ptah-Sokar-Osiris - A hybrid deity of these three associated with creation, death, and renewal. Worshipped in the period of the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE).

Q.

Qebhet - See Kabechet.

Qebehsenuef - A protector god, one of the Four Sons of Horus who safeguarded the canopic container of the intestinal tracts. He presided over the west, had the form or shape of a hawk, and was watched over by Serket.

Qudshu (Qadesh) - Syrian female deity of love, accompaniment of the war deity Reshep, assimilated into Egyptian worship throughout the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE). She was the female deity of sexual pleasure and spiritual euphoria who was connected with Hathor, Anat, and Astarte. Her name means "Holy" and she is always illustrated as a slim naked woman holding the symbols of eroticism and fruitfulness; lotus blossoms in her right hand and serpents or papyrus stems in her left. She was widely venerated throughout Egypt. Her cult reenacted the spiritual marriage between Qudshu and Reshep, a ritual long associated with the Cult of Ishtar/Inanna in Mesopotamia and Astarte in Phoenicia.

R.

Ra (Atum or Re) - The great sun deity of Heliopolis whose cult

spread right across ancient Egypt to become the most famous by the Fifth Dynasty (2498-2345 BCE). The pyramids of Giza are related to Ra as the supreme lord and creator deity who ruled over the land of the living and the dead. He drives his sun barge right across the heavens by day, demonstrating another element of himself with every advance of the sun right across the sky, and then dives into the underworld at night where the barge is threatened by the primordial serpent Apep (Apophis) and must be defended by the other deities and spirits of the warranted dead. Ra was amongst the most essential and famous gods of ancient Egypt. Even when the deity Amun arose in prominence, Ra's position was undiminished and he merged with Amun to become Amun-Ra, the supreme god.

Raettawy (Raet or Raet-Tawy) - She was the female element of Ra. She is related to Hathor and is illustrated as closely looking like Hathor with the uraeus on her head holding the solar disk, sometimes with two plumes over the disk.

Ra-Harakhte (Raharakty or Ra-Harakhty) - A falcon deity amalgam of Ra and Horus who personified the sun at the two horizons, dawn and sundown. 'Harakhte' means "Horus of the Horizon". He is represented as a guy with a hawk's head wearing the solar disk as a crown.

Renpet - A female deity who personified the year. She is represented in engravings by a notched palm branch representing the passing of time, the hieroglyphic image for 'year'. She had no official cult or temple but was an essential part of the Egyptian's comprehension of time: that it was imbued, like everything else, with personality and vigor.

Renenutet (Renenet or Ernutet) - A really crucial female deity represented as a cobra or a rearing cobra with the head of woman. Her name means "Snake Who Nurtures" and she was female deity of nursing and rearing children. In time, she became closely associated with Meskhenet, female deity of childbirth and destiny, and even superseded her to identify the length of an individual's life and considerable events which would befall them. In addition to Meskhenet, she was also connected with Neith and sometimes represented as the mom of Osiris, with Isis as the female spouse of Osiris and mom of Horus, as Atum's partner or accompaniment. In the hereafter she appeared as the "Lady of Justification" connecting

her with the female deity Ma'at. She was thought to protect the clothes used by the king in the hereafter and so was also referred to as "Woman of the Robes". In this capacity, she looked like a fire-breathing cobra who repelled the enemies of the king. She was also a grain female deity referred to as "Lady of the Fertile Fields" and "Lady of the Granaries" who safeguarded the harvest and was the mom of Nepri, deity of grain. As a fruitfulness goddess, she was further connected to the Nile River and the inundation and so with Hapi, the deity of the fertile mud of the Nile.

Reret - A protector godly being in the form or shape of a hippopotamus whose name means "Plant". She represented the constellation Draco and was a protectress of the sun barge as it made its way through the underworld. As the constellation, she is at times referred to as Reret-weret ("The Great Sow") and was described as Girlfriend of the Horizon. She is connected with the better-known Hippopotamus female deity Taweret and, as a sky female deity and protective force, with Hathor and Nut.

Reshep - A Syrian war deity absorbed into Egyptian worship throughout the period of the New Kingdom (1570-1069 BCE). He was the consort of the female deity of sexual enjoyment and holy ecstasy Qudshu (Qadesh) and was worshipped with her in a triad that included the fruitfulness deity Min. The holy marriage of Qudshu and Reshep was reenacted by their followers connecting the cult to that of Inanna/Ishtar of Mesopotamia which had long practiced the exact same routine. Reshep is more connected to Mesopotamia through his recognition in iconography with the Mesopotamian war deity Nergal. As a deity of pestilence, he's also connected to Set, deity of chaos and the arid wastes. Reshep is uniformly represented as a strong warrior holding a raised war club and wearing a skirt and long Mesopotamian-styled beard.

Ruty - The twin lion gods who represented the eastern and western horizons. The name means "Pair of Lions". They were actually associated with Shu and Tefnut as sky godly entities and eventually ended up being related to Ra and the solar barge.

S.

Sah - A celestial god, personification of the constellation Orion, generally coupled with Sothis (Sopdet) as representations of the astral forms of Osiris and Isis. He is referred to as "Father of the

gods" in the Pyramid Texts and was an important aspect of funerary rites where he invited the king to the hereafter. Known also as the "Occupant in Orion", Pyramid Text chapter 186 welcomes the soul, "In the name of the Resident in Orion, with a season in the sky and a season in the world" which can be comprehended as, "with a season in the sky after a season in the world". He is depicted as a man holding the ankh and was sceptre standing in a boat surrounded by stars in a night sky.

Satis (Satet or Satit) - Goddess of the southern border of ancient Egypt with Nubia and connected with Elephantine in the area of Aswan. Her name actually appears on stone jars at Saqqara which were put inside the lower chambers of Djoser's Step Pyramid (c. 2670 BCE) and she is thought to be an older female deity from the Predynastic Period of ancient Egypt (c. 6000-3150 BCE). She is at times seen as the accompaniment of Khnum, deity of the Nile at Elephantine where the Egyptians believed the river originated and is related to the Eye of Ra and Distant Goddess motif in some tales where she returns from a great distance to bring change. In this capacity, she is connected to the inundation of the Nile. She is also connected to Sothis (Sopdet), the personification of the star Sirius whose manifestation in the night sky declared the inundation. She is depicted as woman wearing the White Crown of Upper ancient Egypt with antelope horns.

Sebiumeker - A protector deity who was a major godly being in Meroe, Kush as deity of procreation and fruitfulness. Sebiumeker is connected with Atum as a developer deity and might have been the supreme deity of the pantheon in the area which is modern-day Sudan. His statuary, along with another deity called Tabo, has generally been found near doorways giving rise to the interpretation that he was a defender god. He may not have been, though; his positioning at entrances could have had some meaning touching on change, particularly when placed at the doorways of temples.

Sed - An ancient jackal deity who name first appears on the Palermo Stone from the Fifth Dynasty (2498-2345 BCE) but who was more than likely much older. He was the protector of kingship and the individual king. He presided over the Sed Celebration (also referred to as the Heb-Sed Festival) which was held every thirty



years of a king's rule to revitalize him. He was ultimately absorbed by Wepwawet or it could be that Wepwawet (whose name means "Opener of the Ways") was simply one of Sed's epithets which became more preferred. As protector of the godly king, Sed was related to justice and so connected to the female deity Ma'at.

Sefkhet-Abwy (Safekh-Aubi) - See Seshat.

Sekhmet - One of the most substantial goddesses of ancient Egypt. Sekhmet was a leonine godly being usually illustrated as lady with the head of a lion. Her name means "Powerful" and is generally interpreted as "The Female Powerful One". She was a female deity of damage and healing, of desert winds and cool breezes. She was the daughter of Ra who appears in one of the most crucial stories concerning the Eye of Ra/Distant Goddess theme. When Ra ended up being fed up with the sins of the people on earth, he sent Sekhmet to damage them. She ravaged the land until the other deities implored Ra to stop her before human beings were destroyed totally. Ra had a barrel of beer colored red to attract Sekhmet's blood lust and left it at Dendera where she drank it and fell right into a deep sleep; when she woke she was the humane Hathor. Sekhmet went on to exist in her leonine form, though, and was the client godly being of the military for her powers of damage and revenge. She was referred to as "Smiter of the Nubians" in this regard but she also brought natural disaster. Plagues were called "Messengers of Sekhmet" or "Slaughterers of Sekhmet". In the same way that she could bring the desert winds, she could deflect them, and the same with pestilence; just as she had brought the plague epidemic, she could cure it and was referred to as "Girlfriend of Life" in this capability (and so was very often conjured up in healing spells and incantations by old medical professionals). She was closely related to other leonine deities like, for example, Bastet and Pakhet and was thought to be the aggressive, violent aspect of the female deity Mut.

Sepa - A protector deity in the form or shape of a centipede with the head of a donkey or horns, called "The Centipede of Horus". He was worshipped as the godly being who safeguarded one from snake bites and some form or shape of Sepa was venerated in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE). He had his own temple at Heliopolis where he was connected with Osiris in a mummified

form or shape symbolizing his protecting powers in the hereafter.

Serapis - The hybrid deity created by Ptolemy I Soter of ancient Egypt (r. 323-283 BCE), first ruler of the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), the last dynasty to rule ancient Egypt right before it was taken under Roman governance. Serapis was a blend of Osiris and Apis but his character and traits were a blending of these 2 Egyptian godly entities with the Greek gods Zeus, Helios, Dionysius, Hades, and Asklepius. He was the supreme deity worshipped at the preferred Serapeum close by the Library of Alexandria. Ptolemy I wanted to produce the kind of multi-cultural society his late commander and good example Alexander the Great had tried and Serapis was an important element in this. Serapis was a total mix of Egyptian and Greek ideals who fit the sort of society Ptolemy I motivated.

Seret - A leonine protective female deity likely from Libya. She is only discussed in a Fifth Dynasty (2498-2345 BCE) inscription as a female deity of an area of ancient Egypt lived in generally by Libyans - the 3rd Lower ancient Egypt nome (province). Like the other leonine deities, she's an intense protector of her followers and avenges wrongs done to them.

Serket (Selket, Serqet or Serkis) - She was a protective and also a crucial funerary female deity likely originating in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) and first discussed during the First Dynasty of ancient Egypt (c. 3150-2890 BCE). She is best known from her golden statue found in the tomb of Tutankhamun. Serket was a scorpion female deity represented as woman with a scorpion on her head and arms outstretched in a protecting position. She might have been an early Mom Goddess who evolved into a godly being who safeguarded people (particularly children) from scorpion venom and then to somebody who safeguarded from all venom. A story referred to as Isis and the Seven Scorpions tells of how Isis was insulted by a wealthy woman once and Serket, who had sent her 7 scorpions along as Isis' bodyguards, instructed one of them to sting the woman's son. The boy was going to die from the venom but Isis saved him and forgave the woman. Later on, Serket followed Isis' example of forgiveness and safeguarded other children from scorpions. Her priests were mostly physicians who invoked her name in healing. In the hereafter she helped guide the dead spirits

to paradise and safeguarded a particular dangerous area of travel. Together with Isis, Neith, and Nephthys, she watches over the 4 Sons of Horus as they safeguard the viscera of the dead in tombs.

Seshat (Sefkhet-Abwy or Safekh-Aubi) - She was the female deity of writing, books, notations, and measurements. Her name means "The Female Scribe" and she was the consort of Thoth, deity of wisdom and writing (though in some cases she is depicted as his daughter). She is the patroness of libraries, both public and private, and was called "She Who is Foremost in your house of Books". She was also the customer female deity of scribes. As female deity of measurements she ensured the king gauged correctly in commissioning the building of temples and monuments and assisted him in measurements for routines. She is first mentioned in the Second Dynasty (c. 2890-2670 BCE) as helping king Khasekemwy in this regard. Her association with measurements eventually made her the patroness of home builders, designers, and the ones who dealt in accounting for cattle, other animals, and slaves seized in war. Even though she never had a temple of her own, as R.H. Wilkinson observes, "by virtue of her role in the foundation event she was a part of every temple structure". She is illustrated as woman wearing a leopard skin over a robe with a headband holding a stick with a star on top. She holds a writing implement in her right hand and the notched palm stalk representing the years' passage in her left.

Set (Seth) - God of war, turmoil, storms, and pestilence. His name is translated as "Provocateur of Confusion" and "Destroyer". He is depicted as a red beast with cloven hooves and a forked tale and is the prototype for the later iconography of the Christian Devil. Set was actually a hero-deity who drove away the serpent Apep (Apophis) from the barge of the sun deity and killed it nighttime. He was a desert deity who brought the evil winds of the dry lands to the lush Nile Valley and was related to foreign lands and people. His accompaniments were Anat and Astarte, both goddesses connected with war and both from foreign countries, as well as Taweret, the benign protective female deity of childbirth and fruitfulness. Set is generally defined as "wicked", and did manifest a lot of evil traits, but was not related to by the age-old Egyptians as an embodiment of wicked or darkness. He was rather seen as a necessary stability to deities like Osiris and Horus who represented

all things noble and great, fruitfulness, vitality, and eternity. Set is best referred to as the world's first murderer in the Myth of Osiris where he kills his brother to usurp the throne. Isis returns Osiris to life but, as he's insufficient, descends to the underworld as Lord of the Dead. Isis gives birth to Osiris' child, Horus, who grows up to challenge set for the throne. Their fights, which lasted for eighty years, are defined in the text The Contendings of Horus and Set and were resolved in one version by Isis while, in another, by Neith with Horus announced rightful king and Set banned to the desert lands.

Shay (Shai) - The personification of fate. Shay commanded a person's personal fate and so was connected with goddesses like Meskhenet and Renenutet. Comparable to The Fates of the age-old Greeks, no one could resist or change Shay's choices. The academic Wilkinson mentions a text called Guidelines of Amenemopet which specifies, "None can disregard Shay". This statement exemplifies Shay's chief quality: inevitability. He is illustrated as existing at the weighing of the heart of the spirit in the hereafter or as a man standing in a posture of patience. During the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), when Egyptian deities were hellenized, he was referred to as Agathadaimon, the snake godly being who could tell somebody's future.

Shed - A protecting deity who defended against personal harm from wild animals or mortal opponents. He was conjured up by hunters and fighters and referred to as "He Who Rescues" and "The Enchanter". He was lord of the wild animals and weapons and so could manage both to secure a person who invoked his name. He was also looked for in defense against magic spells cast by someone's opponents and perhaps against demons or ghosts. He is illustrated as a young man with shaved head other than for the sidelock representing youth and carries a quiver of arrows. He usually grasps serpents in his hands as if squashing them. Ultimately his traits were taken in by Horus though he was still venerated by people in their houses and through amulets.

Shentayet - An unknown protecting female deity whose name means "Widow" and who was connected with that element of Isis who lost her male spouse and after that brought him back to life. This element was referred to as Isis-Shentayet. Quite likely invoked

as a protectress of widows but referrals to her are unusual and Isis fulfilled that role as she did so a lot of others.

Shepet - A protective female deity who was an aspect of the hippopotamiform deities Reret or Taweret worshipped at Dendera. In iconography she looks like either of these two but with a crocodile head.

Shesmetet - A protecting leonine female deity called "Girl of Punt" and more than likely an important female deity gave ancient Egypt through trade with Punt. She is usually regarded as an element of Bastet or Sekhmet but rather potentially she was a much older godly being whose traits were soaked up by later leonine goddesses. Her name is pointed out as early as the First Dynasty (c. 3150-2890 BCE) and lent itself to the Shesmetet girdle, a belt of beads, used by the kings of that time. She is represented as lady with the head of a lion.

Shezmu - God of wine and, later, of fragrance and plenty who personified the positive and negative elements of drunkenness. Shezmu is depicted in the Pyramid Text 403 killing and preparing the deities for the king's pleasure and, by the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) was seen torturing the dead spirits as he "lassoes the damned and corrals them for slaughter, squeezing their heads like grapes in a bloody image of damage" (Wilkinson, 129). His image was softened by others showing his benign and peaceful side as lord of the white wine press and this was softened farther as he became associated with oils and perfumes.

Shu - The prehistoric deity of the air whose name means "Emptiness". He was born at the start of creation of Atum (Ra) and sent out to create the world with his sister Tefnut (female deity of moisture). The two were gone so long that Atum came to miss them and sent his eye (the Eye of Ra) searching for them. When the eye returned with them, Atum was so happy he wept and his tears created human beings. She and Tefnut then mated and brought to life Geb (earth) and Nut (sky) who Atum pushed high apart from one another, providing a place for humans to live. Mist was attributed to him as "Lakes of Shu" and the clouds as "Bones of Shu" and he was also related to light and brightness. In this regard he became connected to Thoth and Khonsu, both connected with the moon, just because of moonlight.

**Sia** - The personification of perception and thoughtfulness who represented the heart (seat of feeling, thought, and character). Sia formed a dyad with Hu (representing the tongue), personification of the authority of the spoken word, and a triad with Hu and Heka, deity of magic and medicine but also the primitive force in the universe which empowered life and continual ma'at. Sia represented the intellect while Hu represented the word of Ptah (or Atum) which brought thought into reality and Heka was the underlying force which gave them power. Sia is illustrated as a guy standing at the right side of Ptah (later, Atum/Ra) and held his papyrus scroll. In the Valley of the Kings he's seen in paintings as a member of the team aboard Ra's sun barge.

**Sky Bull** - The godly being who presided over the paradises and the hereafter as a protector, also referred to as "Bull of the West" for his association with the hereafter. Frequently comprehended to be the partner of the 7 cows which are seen with him.

**Sobek** - An important protective deity in the form or shape of a crocodile or a guy with a crocodile's head, Sobek was a deity of water but also related to medication and particularly surgery. His name means "Crocodile" and he was lord of marshes and wetlands and any other wet areas of Egypt. In the Pyramid Texts he's said to be the son of Neith and was worshipped commonly from the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) onwards. As deity of wetlands he was related to fruitfulness and procreation but, as the crocodile god, also with unanticipated death. He was said to separate spouses from their spouses at a whim. Sobek survived on a mythical mountain at the horizon which he ruled from and so was linked to the authority of the king as he, himself, was lord of a domain. This relate to the horizon associated him with Ra and resulted in the form or shape of Ra called Sobek-Ra. Sobek is just one of the best understood gods of old ancient Egypt and was exceptionally preferred in his time. His priests kept live crocodiles in the temples who were fed extravagantly on the best cuts of meat and dealt with better than many human entities of the time. When these crocodiles died, they were mummified and buried with all the care given to a person. He was also connected with the Nile which was said to issue forth as the sweat of Sobek.

**Sokar (Seker)** - A protecting falcon deity of Memphis who was

actually a farming godly being and one of the oldest in Egypt. His celebration was just one of the earliest observed and, merged with the Khoiak Festival of Osiris, went on to be celebrated throughout Egypt's history. He evolved from a deity of farming and development to the deity of artisans and protector of the Memphis necropolis after Osiris became more preferred. Sokar is generally illustrated as a funerary mound surrounded by falcon heads, as a falcon, or as a falcon-headed man. He is related to the hereafter as defender of the entryway to the underworld and the deity who carries the departed king's spirit in his barge to paradise. In time, he became connected with Ptah and then Osiris to ultimately integrate by the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) into Ptah-Sokar-Osiris who was a hybrid funerary deity commanding the hereafter.

Sons of Horus - See 4 Sons of Horus.

Sopdu (Soped or Sopedu) - A protective deity of the eastern border of ancient Egypt who secured over the outposts and soldiers on the frontier. He is depicted as a falcon with a flail over the right wing or as a bearded man with a crown including 2 plumes. Sopdu was associated with Horus and the idolized king in his celestial form. Wilkinson writes, "The departed king, in his role as Osiris-Orion, is known to impregnate Isis as the star Sothis and to produce Horus-Sopdu". In the earthly realm, he ensured the proper resources reached the eastern border garrisons and helped the king control native populations in those areas.

Sothis - The personification of the star Sirius (the "pet dog star") whose manifestation declared the yearly inundation of the Nile. She was worshipped as a cow-female deity in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) related to Sirius. She was the accompaniment of Sah, who personified the constellation Orion, and the 2 were associated with Osiris and Isis. In this role, she was the mother of Sopdu and so attracted as a protective influence. She was also associated with Satis who was linked to the inundation of the Nile as accompaniment of Khnum. Early depictions of Sothis represent her as a cow with a plant between her horns while later images show her as lady wearing the White Crown of Upper ancient Egypt with horns on her head or plumes with a five-pointed star above her. She became progressively identified with Isis and was ultimately taken in into that female deity totally. Isis describes

herself as Sothis in a copy of the text of The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys from the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE) showing how the assimilation was nearly complete by that time.

Souls of Nekhen and Pe - Protective spirits who were considered the ancestral spirits of the city of Nekhen in Upper ancient Egypt (also referred to as Hierakonopolis) and the city of Pe in Lower ancient Egypt (also referred to as Buto). These spirits symbolically joined Upper and Lower ancient Egypt and served the king in life and through death. While the king lived he was related to Horus, who the spirits motivated, and when the king died he became associated with Osiris, whom the spirits grieved and honored. The living spirits of Pe are depicted as guys with falcon heads and those of Nekhen as jackal-headed. Both are seen in tomb engravings of the kings kneeling to honor the departed king's arrival in the hereafter.

Star Deities - Gods and goddesses identified with the night sky. By the time of the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) the Egyptians had determined five of the planets which they referred to as "Stars That Know No Rest" and associated with gods: the called Mercury 'Sebegu' (a form or shape of the deity Set); Venus ("The One Who Crosses" and "God of the Early Morning"); Mars ("Horus of the Horizon" and "Horus the Red"); Jupiter ("Horus Who Restricts the 2 Lands"); Saturn ("Horus Bull of the Heavens"). Further, the star Sirius was associated with Sothis and then Isis while Orion represented the deity Sah, "Father of the Gods". The manifestation of Sirius heralded the inundation of the Nile, the guarantee of fruitfulness, and represented the cyclical nature of existence and so happened linked to Osiris, the dying and restoring god, and Isis, the someone who restored him. The stars then were called "Followers of Osiris" who sailed right across the night sky in accordance with godlike pattern. Sah and Sothis in the paradises showed the godly couple Osiris and Isis and the deity Sopdu, (son of Sothis), the astral form or shape of Horus. Thus the night sky told the stories of the most significant stories of the Egyptian society and ensured the people of an eternity in the gods' presence when they looked up at the stars.

Sutekh - The Semitic name for the deity Set (Seth) which the people called the Hyksos introduced throughout the 2nd Intermediate Period (c. 1782-1570 BCE). The Hyksos determined Set with the



aggressive element of their deity Baal. Set was referred to as Sutekh through the reign of Ramesses II (1279-1213 BCE) and invoked as a vanguard in war.

T.

Ta-Bitjet - A protective female deity particularly against harmful bites and stings. She is regularly conjured up in healing spells and connected with the female deity Serket. Eventually she was soaked up into Isis.

Tasenetnofret - A protective female deity of Kom Ombo whose name means "The Good Sister" or "The Beautiful Sister". She was a local manifestation of the female deity Hathor, consort of Horus, and mom of Panebtawy.

Tatenen - An earth deity who personified the primitive mound at creation and represented the land of Egypt. He is likely the same deity referred to as Khenty-Tjenenet in the period of the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE). He was worshipped at Memphis during the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) and went on to be venerated mainly in that area through the rest of Egypt's history. His association with the primordial mound connected him with Ptah and, through Ptah, with Atum and Ra, the other names for the developer god/sun god. Tatenen was a bisexual god, referred to as "Mom of All the Gods" in one text.

Taweret (Tauret) - A protective female deity in the form or shape of a hippopotamus, the most famous hippopotamus deity from old Egypt, related to both Isis and Hathor. Taweret is a female deity of giving birth and fruitfulness who was incredibly famous throughout Egypt's history. She was conjured up regularly for protection of kids and help during pregnancy and birth. The ancient Egyptians observed the female hippopotamus to be incredibly protecting of her children which led to the form or shape of this goddess. The male hippopotamus was really aggressive and considered one of the most harmful animals in ancient Egypt so he was associated with the deity Set leading to images of Taweret as accompaniment of Set even though the 2 deities had nothing in common. Taweret is carefully related to Hathor and called "Fan of Horus" both of which distance her from Set. She is further identified as the accompaniment of Bes, the dwarf deity of childbirth, sexuality, humor, and war. Like Bes, Taweret was included on household

items like furniture, cosmetic cases, pots, spoons and in fruitfulness images in the home.

Tayet (Tait) - Goddess of weaving who provided the clothes for the king. She was worshipped from the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) where she was represented as protecting the king's head, securing him after death, gathering his bones, and ensuring him welcome by the other gods in the hereafter. She later ended up being associated with embalming and was said to weave the cloth for the embalming tents and, later, the plasters used for wrapping the mummy which were referred to as "wrappings from the hands of Tayet" which associated her with Nephthys.

Tefnut - Goddess of moisture, sister of Shu, daughter of Atum (Ra) at the creation of the world. Shu and Tefnut were the first 2 gods Atum created either by mating with his shadow or by spitting. R. H. Wilkinson notes that her name represents the sound of spitting and she was usually represented "by a set of lips, spitting, in late texts". She is female deity of the environment of the lower world, the earth, just as Shu is deity of the upper atmosphere above the earth. Tefnut is the mom of Geb (earth) and Nut (sky) who were born so people could have someplace to live. She is very often depicted as lady seated with a lion's head or a serpent with a lion's head.

Tenenit (Tenenet or Tjenenet) - Goddess of beer, developing and childbirth. Her name comes from "tenemu" which means "beer". She was the accompaniment of the deity Montu and associated with Meskhenet as a female deity of royal births. She is the customer female deity of brewers.

Tetrads - Representations of efficiency corresponding sometimes to the 4 cardinal points of the compass and best represented by the Four Sons of Horus. Balance was an vital idea to the old Egyptians and the numbers two, four, and eight figure significantly in likenesss of the godly entities (as do three, 6, and nine). Every male deity has a female equivalent or a womanly aspect, the 4 goddesses Isis, Neith, Nephthys, and Serket watch over the 4 Sons of Horus, and the Ogdoad was the grouping of the eight deities of creative compounds.

Thoth - God of writing and wisdom, truth and stability, one of the most vital godly entities in the Egyptian pantheon worshipped from

the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) on to the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), the last to rule Egypt. He was likely originally a lunar god, child of Atum (Ra) but later texts represent him as the child of Horus. Thoth is portrayed in some texts as a baboon but mostly as a man with the head of an ibis holding a writing implement. He is credited with developing writing and was the record-keeper of the gods. He was referred to as "Lord of Time" and "Reckoner of Years" as he marked the passage of time and, through the effective magic of his godly knowledge of words, gave the king a long reign so he could maintain order on earth. He was the customer deity of libraries and of scribes. In every story told of him, Thoth is the godly friend and benefactor of the people on earth who gave people comprehending through the gift of the written word. He appears in one story as betting for the 5 days needed for Nut to bring to life the First 5 Gods and in others as moderating between the gods and providing messages. In the hereafter he stands with Osiris and keeps records in the Hall of Truth at the routine of the Weighing of the Heart. His consort was Seshat, his daughter or his marriage partner, who was his female counterpart and also client godly being of libraries and books.

Tjenenyet - A protecting female deity from the 12th Dynasty (1991-1802 BCE) who was more than likely worshipped earlier. She was consort of the deity Montu and was mainly worshipped at Hermonthis (Armant) near Thebes.

Tree Goddesses - A number of widely known Egyptian goddesses were associated with trees, most notably Isis, Hathor, and Nut. Male deities were sometimes linked to a particular tree but it seems only in particular myths or imagery. Hathor was notoriously related to the sycamore tree and referred to as "Lady of the Sycamore" but Isis was also linked to this tree. The practice of burying a body in a wood casket was thought to be a return of the deceased to the womb of the Mother Goddess.

Triads - Essential groupings of 3 deities, generally a father-god, mother-god, and child-god, the 2 best understood being the Theban Triad of Amun, Mut, and Khons and the Abydos Triad of Osiris, Isis, and Horus. There are examples of other triads, however, which didn't follow this pattern like, for example, the Amun-Ra-Ptah Triad where all 3 deities represented the exact same celestial power (the

sun). Triads are also seen in depictions of the hereafter where ram, lion, and jackal-headed gods are organized together.

Tutu - A protective deity called "He Who Keeps Opponents at a Distance", worshipped throughout the latter part of Egypt's history. He warded off satanic forces and black magic and was illustrated as a striding lion with the head of a guy, large wings, and a serpent for a tail.

U.

Uat-Ur - The personification of the Mediterranean Sea. See Wadj-Wer.

Uajyt (Wadjet or Uto) - Associated with Nekhbet, a protective female deity of Lower Egypt. She is illustrated as a serpent with lady's head. She is an aspect of Wadjet, sister of Nekhbet, in later images from Lower Egypt.

Unut (Wenet or Wenut) - A protective female deity worshipped at Hermopolis and referred to as "The Swift One". She was illustrated as woman with a bunny's head or a serpent with a bunny's head and is often described as "the bunny goddess". She was related to the deity Wenenu, depicted as a man with a rabbit's head, who was an aspect of Osiris or in some cases Ra. She is understood mainly from amulets demonstrating her image.

W.

Wadjet - A great protecting female deity and patroness of Lower Egypt, one of the oldest deities in the Egyptian temple, represented as the rearing cobra which became the king's insignia (the uraeus). She was also described as Uajyt in her aggressive form or shape and was the counter-stability to the more motherly Nekhbet, her sister. Wadjet was worshipped as an essential female deity in the Predynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) and by the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-2613 BCE) was the supreme godly being of Lower ancient Egypt represented very often with Nekhbet who signified Upper Egypt. She was the daughter of Ra and one of the goddesses featured in stories about the Eye of Ra. At the dawn of creation she was sent forth by Ra as his eye to find Shu and Tefnut when they had gone off to create the world. She planted the first papyrus plants, set out the papyrus fields in the swamps of the Nile Delta, and helped Isis raise Horus there when they were hiding from Set.

Among her titles is Weret-Hekau, implying "Great of Magic" and she was regularly conjured up for defense against demons, bad luck, or ghosts.

Wadj-Wer (Uat-Ur) - The personification of the Mediterranean Sea whose name means "The Great Green". Current expertship has changed the conventional view of the deity and he's now really believed to have personified the lakes, swamps, and lagoons of the Delta area near to the Mediterranean. Wilkinson notes engravings which reference "crossing the great green" by foot which would suggest a land-crossing through the Delta area rather than the sea. He was worshipped as early as the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE) and continues to be referenced through the rest of Egypt's history, particularly through protecting amulets and burial place engravings.

Waset (Wosret) - A protective female deity of the city of Thebes whose name means "The Powerful Female One". She was the personification of the city which was also referred to as 'Waset'. She was originally an aspect of Hathor but appeared with her own unique character and iconography by the time of the Middle Kingdom (c. 2040-1782 BCE). She is depicted as woman holding the Was sceptre and ankh and a personnel adorned with ribbons but is also shown with a bow and arrows and an axe representing the army might of Thebes.

Weneg - A protective deity first referenced in the Old Kingdom period (c. 2613-2181 BCE) who held up the sky and maintained order between the paradises and the earth. He is closely associated with ma'at the idea and Ma'at the female deity who personified harmony in that he acted as a simply conciliator between the gods in their disagreements.

Wenenu - A protective god, element of Osiris or sometimes Ra, accompaniment of Unut. He is illustrated as a rabbitt-headed man.

Wepset - A protective female deity whose name means "She Who Burns" who destroys the adversaries of Osiris. She is generally represented as a serpent but later as woman wearing the uraeus with horns and the sun disk overhead. She includes in stories concerning the Eye of Ra and is one of the personifications of the Distant Goddess actual idea where the Eye of Ra departs from the

deity and is returned, or returns itself, bringing transformation.

Wepwawet (Wepiu or Wepuaut) - One of the most old gods of ancient Egypt and the oldest representation of a jackal god, pre-dating Anubis, with whom he is often confused. His name means "Opener of the Ways" and this has been translated as opening the way for king in battle, opening the way to the hereafter, and opening the way at a person's birth. He is depicted on the Narmer Scheme (c. 3150 BCE) and connected with Wadjet. He eventually became carefully related to Horus and, as Wepwawet-Ra, with the sun deity Ra. He is illustrated as a jackal, sometimes wearing a scarf with a falcon right before him.

Werethekau (Weret-Hekau) - A crucial protecting female deity or, more often, an epithet applied to other female godly entities like Isis. The name means "Great of Magic" and is related to the uraeus and the crown of Lower Egypt. Wadjet is referred to as Weret-Hekau, as is Isis, but the name appears to have also designated a particular female deity of security represented as a rearing snake though this could just be Wadjet in her aggressive form.

Y.

Yah - See Iah.

Yam - The Phoenician deity of the sea who fought the Lord Baal for control of the world. He went into the Egyptian temple through trade and made his way into Egyptian folklore through stories of his battles with Set. He was the personification of the raging sea and greatly feared. No temples were ever raised to him but he's referenced in some files which suggest he was an issue to seafarers who may have worn amulets with his image for security.

Z.

Zenenet - Another name for Isis in the city of Hermonthis (modern-day Armant) near Thebes.

## Chapter 2: The Role of Women in Ancient Egypt

One of the most vital values of age-old Egyptian society, arguably the most vital value, was ma'at - the principle of harmony and stability in all elements of someone's life. This perfect was the most essential duty observed by the pharaoh who, as arbitrator between the deities and the people, was supposed to be a good example for

how one lived a well stabilityd life. Egyptian art, architecture, religious practices, even governmental agencies all exhibit a best proportion of stability and this can also be seen in gender roles throughout the history of old Egyptian society.

### Egyptian Royal Woman

Women in ancient Egypt were the equals of men in every area except professions. Historians Bob Brier and Hoyt Hobbs note how women amounted to men in practically every location except for jobs: "Guys combated, ran the government, and managed the farm; women prepared, stitched, and managed the home". Men held positions of authority just like king, governor, general, and a man was considered the head of the household but, within that patriarchy, women exercised significant power and independence. Egyptologist Barbara Watterson writes:

In old ancient Egypt woman took pleasure in the same rights under the law as a man. What her *de jure* [rightful privilege] rights were depended upon her social class not her sex. All landed property came down in the female line, from mother to daughter, on the presumption, perhaps, that maternity is a matter of simple fact, paternity a matter of viewpoint. A woman was entitled to administer her own property and deal with it as she wished. She could purchase, sell, be a partner in legal agreements, be administrator in wills and witness to legal files, bring an action at court, and adopt children in her own name. An age-old Egyptian woman was lawfully *capax* [skilled, capable] On the other hand, an ancient Greek woman was supervised by a *kyrios* [male protector] and many Greek women who resided in ancient Egypt throughout the Ptolemaic Period, observing Egyptian women acting without *kyrioi*, were motivated to do so themselves. In essence, an old Egyptian woman enjoyed greater social standing than a lot of women of other societies, both ancient and modern-day.

The respect accorded to women in age-old ancient Egypt is evident in almost every aspect of the society from the faiths to social customs. The gods were both male and female, and each had their own similarly essential areas of competence. Women could wed who they wanted and divorce those that no longer fit them, could hold what jobs they liked - within limits - and travel at their whim. The earliest creation myths of the society all highlight, to greater or lower degrees, the value of the feminine principle.

## The Divine Feminine

In the most famous creation myth, the deity Atum lights upon the primordial mound in the middle of the swirling waters of mayhem and goes about creating the world. In some versions of this tale, though, it is the female deity Neith who brings creation and, even where Atum is the main character, the primordial waters are personified as Nu and Naunet, a stability of the male and female actual ideas in consistency which integrate for the creative act.

Following the creation and start of time, women continue to play a pivotal role as evidenced in the equally famous story of Osiris and Isis. This brother and sister couple were said to have ruled the world (that being Egypt) after its creation and to have taught humans the precepts of society, the art of farming, the proper worship of the gods. Osiris is killed by his jealous brother Set, and it is Isis who brings him back to life, who brings to life his kid Horus and raises him to be king, and who, with her sister Nephthys and other goddesses like, for example, Serket and Neith, helps to restore stability to the land.

## Isis Wall Painting

The female deity Hathor, sent out to earth as the destroyer Sekhmet to penalize people for their transgressions, becomes people's friend and close companion after getting intoxicated on beer and waking with a more joyful spirit. Tenenet was the female deity of beer, thought to be the drink of the gods, who provided the people with the recipe and oversaw effective brewing. Shay was the female deity of the written word and librarians, Tayet the female deity of weaving, Tefnut the female deity of moisture. Even the passage of the year was viewed as womanly as personified by Renpet who notched her palm branch to mark the passage of time. The female deity Bastet, one of the most preferred in all of Egypt, was a protector of women, of the home, and of women's tricks. Egyptian religion honored and elevated the feminine, and so it is barely surprising that women were necessary members of the clergy and temple life.

## Women & Faith

The most crucial position lady could hold, beginning in the Middle Kingdom of ancient Egypt (2040-1782 BCE), was God's Wife of Amun. There were a lot of "God's Wives" connected with different



godly entities, and actually, in the Middle Kingdom, the God's Partner of Amun was just one among a lot of. The God's Marriage partner was an honorary title given to lady (actually of any class but later of the upper class) who would help the high priest in events and tend to the god's statue. Throughout the New Kingdom of ancient Egypt (1570-1069 BCE) the position increased in prestige till, by the time of the Third Intermediate Duration (1069-525 BCE), the God's Wife of Amun was equal in power to a king and effectively ruled Upper Egypt. During the New Kingdom period, the most famous of the God's Wives was the female pharaoh Hatshepsut (1479-1458 BCE) but there were tons of other women to hold the office right before and after her.

A woman could be scribes and also priests, generally of a cult with a feminine godly being. The priests of Isis, as an example, were female and male, while cults with a male deity usually had only male priests (as when it comes to Amun). The high eminence of the God's Wife of Amun is another example of the stability observed by the age-old Egyptians in that the position of the High Priest of Amun was stabilized by a similarly effective woman.

It must be noted that the designation 'cult' in defining ancient Egyptian faith doesn't always carry the same meaning it does in the modern day. A cult in old ancient Egypt would be the equivalent of a sect in modern-day religious faith. It is also important to recognize that there were no spiritual services as one would observe them in the present. People engaged with their deities most completely at celebrations where women very often played crucial roles just like the 2 virgins who would perform The Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys at the celebrations of Osiris. Priests kept the temples and took care of the statue of the god, and the people visited the temple to request for help on different matters, repay debts, appreciate, and look for counsel on problems, choices, and dream analysis.

Dreams were considered websites to the hereafter, airplanes on which the gods and the dead could communicate with the living; they didn't always do so plainly, though. Competent interpreters were needed to understand the signs in the dream and what they meant. Egyptologist Rosalie David discuss the following:

In the Deir el-Medina texts, there are referrals to 'wise women' and

the role they played in anticipating future events and their causation. It has been suggested that such seers might have been a regular aspect of practical faith in the New Kingdom and perhaps even earlier.

These sensible women were proficient at analyzing dreams and having the ability to anticipate the future. The only extant accounts of dreams and their analysis come from men, Hor of Sebennytyos and Ptolemaios, son of Glaukios, (both c. 200 BCE), but engravings and pieces suggest that women were mainly sought advice from in these matters. David continues, "Some temples were renowned as centers of dream incubation where the petitioner could pass the night in a special building and communicate with the gods or departed relatives to get insight into the future". The most famous of these was attached to the Temple of Hathor at Dendera where the clergy was mostly female.

Although women looked after the house, the extended family, and the kids, they were also totally free - if they had the method - to leave these responsibilities to a servant or other female relative and look for work outside the home. Just as in the present day, a mom would raise her daughter according to her own values and life style, and so woman who prioritized household chores and family would likely produce a child who did the same; there was, though, no cultural particularization against women working and holding certain crucial positions.

Many women, in reality, who had been raised to be housewives turned those abilities into high-paying jobs in the houses of nobility and the upper class. Others, who found household chores satisfying and whose partners and sons provided amply, were content to look after the home and family. There's no distinction between this social structure and that of lots of societies today with the exemption that, in old Egypt, it was understood that the man was the head of the home and had the final word in choices. Even so, there is lots of proof to suggest that men consulted with their wives very often and that the marriage was viewed as an equal collaboration.

### Women at Home

Although men held the place of authority, women kept the home functioning; whether they did so personally or monitored the work of servants. Even if a woman had a job outside the home, she was

still accountable for maintaining it. Guys are pointed out assisting with household chores, but it was actually not their main obligation.

A female spouse and mom had lots of day-to-day jobs starting with the dawn. She would need to wake her partner and children for work or school, maintain the family altar, prepare breakfast, clean up later on, tidy the home, guarantee the home was free of bugs and rodents, bring water from the well, guarantee the stores of grain and other supplies were safe from contamination or pests, look after the kids if they were young, see to the needs of the other members of the extended family if they were senior, feed the family pets and guarantee they were healthy, tend her personal garden, prepare the light afternoon meal, bake bread, brew beer, prepare the evening meal, take care of the weaving and stitching of clothes, sheets, blankets, and coats, wash, welcome her male spouse and sons when they returned from work or school, serve dinner, tidy up later on, feed the animals, put the children to sleep, and prepare for bed.

#### Beer Developing in Ancient Egypt

Some women also chose to work from home, and so, in addition to their daily chores, they also needed to make time for their job. Work-from-home generally had to do with baking, developing beer, sandal-making, basket-weaving, precious jewelry work, seal-making, textile weaving, and making appeals and amulets.

There were usually tons of other women in the home one could contact to aid with these tasks since Egyptians lived with prolonged families. There was no marriage ceremony in old Egypt; a woman just moved with her possessions to the home of her male spouse or her male spouse's family. A married couple could find themselves living with the male spouse's widowed mom, auntie, uncle, and cousins when they were first setting up a home. These circumstances meant little privacy but some people on hand to assist with tasks.

#### The Domestic Cult

Each home had its own altar which needed to be kept clean and neat. People didn't go to the temples in the area to praise their deities but held private ceremonies and rituals in their homes. These altars would normally have an image or statue of a patron

deity or female deity and sacrifices would be positioned there along with prayers making demands or giving thanks. This practice was particularly common in the New Kingdom of ancient Egypt (c. 1570-1069 BCE) and appears to have given rise to rituals which modern-day experts describe as the Domestic Cult or cults of domesticity.

These cults are suggested by archaeological discoveries and engravings which appear to show an elevated focus on gratitude of the womanly by concentrating on female godly entities. Pretty much every home is presumed to have had an individual altar honoring the family's protecting godly beings and ancestors, but these altars mainly feature statuettes, images, and amulets of Renenutet (a female deity of protection in cobra form), Taweret (protective female deity of childbirth and fruitfulness in hippo form), Bes (protective deity of childbirth, children, fruitfulness, and sexuality), and Bastet (female deity of women, kids, hearth, home, and women's secrets). Scholar Barry J. Kemp notes how, in the worker's village at Deir el-Medina, there are paintings on the walls of the upstairs spaces which "provided the focus for domestic femininity". This cult is thought to have developed in reaction to the vital role women played in the life of the home.

#### Stela of Renefseneb

Egyptologist Gay Robins notes how "the rites practiced in the domestic cult may have included offering food, libations, and flowers at the altar, as in other Egyptian cults" and that these rituals "suggest that women of the family had a fundamental part to play". While this is no doubt true, and there might well have been a "domestic cult," it is also possible that home altars throughout the New Kingdom simply celebrated the feminine aspect of divinity and security more very often than the manly or that these kinds of altars have been found intact more than others.

It must be remembered that goddesses function more prominently in Egyptian religions and stories than in those of other societies and so it is hardly surprising to find home altars honoring the feminine. Bastet was actually not just a "woman's goddess" but one of the most preferred deities in all of ancient Egypt with both sexes, and the Cult of Isis ended up being so famous that it would last longer than each other Egyptian cult centuries into the Christian period.

The festivals of goddesses like Bastet, Isis, Hathor, and Neith were country events in which everybody got involved just as they did for gods like Osiris, Ptah, and Amun.

### Women at work

Egyptian society empowered women from the time of the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150 - c. 2613 BCE) through the Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BCE) as evidenced by effective female rulers like, for example, Neithhotep in the First Dynasty through Cleopatra VII in the Ptolemaic Dynasty. There doesn't seem to have been the requirement of a certain cult in the New Kingdom to raise the womanly since women had been getting involved almost equally in Egyptian society for countless years already.

### Egyptian Scarab Amulets

For instance, from the time of the Old Kingdom of ancient Egypt (c. 2613-2181 BCE) women held the position of 'sealers' which was among the most vital jobs one could have. In the 12th Dynasty of the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) women were still in this position and the practice went on into the New Kingdom. Robins explains:

Sealing was one of the commonest duties of guys throughout the bureaucracy since, in the lack of locks and keys, seals were used to safeguard property. A sealer brought the licensed seal with which to secure containers and storage places against unapproved entry.

Women as sealers are proof of their equality with men throughout Egypt's history. Although, as in the home, men were considered the dominant authority figures, women could clearly hold the same position as long as they were not supervising and giving orders to men.

Even this point refrains from doing hold true in every age of Egypt's history, though, as it seems the female doctor Pesehet (c. 2500 BCE) was an instructor at the health school at Sais and the position of God's Wife of Amun, which ended up being progressively crucial in the Middle Kingdom of Egypt, was the female equivalent of the male High Priest. Female doctors would have seen both male and female clients, female seers would have translated the dreams and prophecies of males and also females, and female dental practitioners would have worked on minimizing the tooth real pain

of men often as women.

Women also were the first beer makers and textile makers in ancient Egypt and went on to manage workshops and breweries even when men took over the everyday operation of the business. Paintings, inscriptions, and statuary portray women operating in and monitoring over manufacture and circulation of products. Women of means could also be the Mistress of the House meaning they owned their own land, produce, and means of harvest and circulation.

Those who had acquired particularly impressive skills in home management could make a living as Family Supervisors in the houses of the wealthy and nobility. These women were accountable for supervising the servants and ensuring that every job was done to fulfillment and equipping the home with supplies and organizing official suppers and banquets. The title of Keeper of the Dining Hall was particularly crucial to the upper-class nobility who captivated foreign diplomats and other dignitaries as the banquet ready and served would need to be flawless in every way.

Women might have worked their way up to these kinds of positions from the lower status of housemaid, servant, or cook. Egyptologist Joyce Tyldesley writes:

An Egyptian woman of great character could always find work as a servant; the absence of modern benefits, like electrical energy and plumbed water, meant that there was a consistent need for unskilled domestic labour. A servant's wages were reasonably inexpensive and most middle- and upper-class homes had at least one housemaid who could be trained in domestic abilities while assisting with the more arduous home chores.

Girls would go into the service at a young age, sometimes around 13, and if they proved themselves to be conscientious and loyal, could move up to a greater position. These women were critically important to the maintenance of a house, and numerous letters and inscriptions make this clear. A common practice in old ancient Egypt was writing letters to the dead asking for help in some matter. These generally assumed an issue was being caused by some supernatural entity, normally an upset ghost or spirit whom the deceased could reason with or confront.

In one of these letters to the dead from a female spouse to her left spouse, the woman requests for his intercession on the part of a serving girl who is ill. She writes:

Can you not defend her day and night with any man who is doing her damage, and any woman who is doing her harm? Why do you really want your threshold to be made desolate? Defend her again - now! - so that her family might be re-established and libations put for you. If there is no help from you, your home will be destroyed; don't you know that it is this serving maid who makes your house amongst guys? Defend her! Watch over her! (Parkinson, 143).

A pretty good servant was generally considered a family member, and in some periods, a childless couple would adopt a servant as successor to guarantee that their mortuary rites were performed properly and that there would be a person to leave their estate to. In the above letter, the female spouse threatens the male spouse with cutting off his food and drink sacrifices (" why do you want your threshold to be made desolate?") if he does not intercede on the girl's behalf. This was a really serious threat as it was thought the dead required day-to-day nourishment in the hereafter and it shows how much this serving girl meant to the author of the letter.

If a woman didn't care for domestic work, she could be a performer. Women are made a record of as musicians, singers, and dancers whether openly or for temple routines. Women could also be holy vocalists who accompanied and helped the God's Wife of Amun at Thebes and, in some instances, had success to that position. In order to become a God's Wife, the woman would really need to know how to read and write and so, although a number of scholars claim that women lacked this ability, there seem to have been more of them than are credited.

### Ancient Egyptian Music and Dancing.

Evidence for women' literacy originates from ostraca (clay pot shards) with notes on them relating to childbirth, children, dressmaking, laundry, and other domestic concerns. These ostraca are the age-old equivalent of the present order of business sometimes and, in others, are either protective charms or execration texts. Whatever form or shape they take, there's no doubt they were written by women.

Women were denied high positions like, for example, vizier and, save for some notable exceptions, the monarchy, but they certainly had greater chances for personal improvement and monetary gain than their sisters in neighboring countries. Women were vital figures as midwives, seers, and tattoo artists - though it is uncertain if they were paid for these services - but also feature prominently in positions most often held by males. The women of old ancient Egypt were mainly the directors of their own fate, and oftentimes, the only limitation to their success was their own skill and creativity.

#### [Chapter 3: Neith](#)

Neith (aka Net, Neit or Nit) and is one of the oldest godly entities of old ancient Egypt who was worshipped early in the Pre-Dynastic Period (c. 6000 - 3150 BCE) and whose veneration went on through the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323 - 30 BCE), the last to rule ancient Egypt right before the coming of Rome. She was a war goddess, female deity of creation, mom female deity who developed birth, and funerary female deity who cared for and helped to dress the dead spirits. Her cult center was at Sais in the Nile Delta and she went on as the most preferred female deity of Lower ancient Egypt even after her characteristics were largely given to Isis and Hathor and those goddesses became more preferred in Egypt. Neith went on to be honored as the customer female deity of Sais throughout Egypt's history as she was considered a great protector of the people of the land and the most effective arbitrator between humanity and the gods.

Neith is known to have existed at the creation of the world and, in some stories, even the developer herself who gave birth to Atum (Ra) who then completed the act of creation. She is always represented as exceptionally wise and just as in the story of The Contendings of Horus and Set where she settles the question of who will rule ancient Egypt and, by extension, the world. She is one of the 4 goddesses, in addition to Isis, Nephthys, and Serket, who appear on the canopic containers in the burial place of Tutankhamun and is likely best known today for her statuary there. She stands supervise Duamutef, one of the Four Sons of Horus, who safeguards the canopic containers in the burial places and also appears alongside Osiris, Anubis, and Thoth as a just judge of the dead in the hereafter. Her signs are the weapon and a sword and guard as a war goddess, a weaving shuttle as a funerary goddess,



and the Red Crown of Lower ancient Egypt as female deity of creation and mom goddess. Neith is often depicted sitting on her throne holding either a sceptre or a bow and 2 arrows. She is also at times viewed as a cow, linking her with Hathor or with the Great Cow who was mother to Ra.

### Names & Origins

Neith is also understood by the names Net, Neit, Nit all of which, according to academic Geraldine Pinch, may mean "the scary one" because of her immense power and large reach. She was also called "mother of the gods", "grandma of the gods", and "great goddess". Her worship began in Lower ancient Egypt around the city of Sais and she's thought to have actually been a female deity of searching. The earliest depictions of her show her with a bow and arrows but, according to Geraldine Pinch, this was a later interpretation of an earlier sign: "The curious sign that represented Neith in these early times may originally have been a click beetle. Later this sign was reinterpreted as two arrows crossing a shield. Click beetles are usually found near water and Neith was often equated with Mehet-Weret, a primeval female deity whose name means the Great Flood". There's no doubt, however, that she became a war female deity by the time of the Early Dynastic Duration (c. 3150-2613 BCE) as names for her from that period include "Neith Fights", "Neith is Triumphant" and, by the time of the Old Kingdom (c. 2613-2181 BCE), she was considered a smart veteran and the reputable mediator of the gods and between the gods and the people on earth. Scholar Richard H. Wilkinson comments on the following:

Neith is just one of the most ancient godly entities understood from Egypt. There's sufficient proof that she was one of the most crucial deities of the prehistoric and Early Dynastic periods and, remarkably, her veneration went on to the very end of the pharaonic age. Her character was intricate as her mythology went on to grow over this great period of time and, although lots of early myths of the female deity are undoubtedly lost to us, the image we have the ability to recover is still one of an effective godly being whose roles encompassed elements of this life and the beyond (156-157).

According to one myth, Neith preceeded creation and was present

when the waters of Nun started to swirl at her command to give rise to the ben-ben (the prehistoric mound) upon which Ra (Atum) stood to complete the job. In another variation of the story, Neith created the world and after that went straight to found her city of Sais, leaving the remainder of the work to Atum. By the time of the end of the Ptolemaic Dynasty Neith was still acknowledged as an imaginative force of massive power who "created the world by speaking seven magical words" (Pinch, 170). She was closely connected with the creative element of water and was "the personification of the fertile primeval waters" and was "the mother of all serpents and crocodiles" and being the "great mom who gave birth to Ra and who instituted giving birth when there had been no childbirth right before" (Pinch, 170). In still other myths, it is Neith, not Isis, who is the mom of Horus the godly kid and conservator of order.

### Bronze Statue of Neith

Neith might have originally been a fruitfulness godly being corresponding to the female deity Tanit who was later worshipped in North Africa at Carthage in that Ta-Nit in Egyptian means "the land of Nit" and can also be interpreted as "from the land of Nit", as that area was understood. She is also related to Astarte of Phoenicia and, through her, to Ishtar of Mesopotamia. Herodotus claims that the people of Sais were deeply dedicated to Neith as the creator and preserver of all and identified her with the Greek female deity Athena. Plato also says something about the link between Neith and Athena in his discussion of the Timaeus where he writes, "The residents [of Sais] have a deity for their foundress; she is hired the Egyptian tongue Neith and is asserted by them to be the exact same whom the Hellenes call Athena" (21e). Her identification as the most powerful creative force in the vast universe isn'ted by Plutarch (c. 50 - 120 CE) who writes that the temple of Neith at Sais held this inscription: "I Am All That Has Been, That Is, which Will Be. No Mortal Has Actually Yet Been Able to Life the Veil that Covers Me". It is pretty interesting to note that her name, among its tons of other associations, links to the root word for "weave" which carries with it the meaning of "to make exist" or "create" or "to be".

### Neith the Great Goddess

Egyptian spiritual life - which was not really in any way differentiated from life - was fixated the idea of ma'at (consistency

and stability) and there are many deities besides the female deity Ma'at who embody and maintain this actual idea. Thoth, as an example, healed and helped both Horus and Set in their battle for supremacy of rule so that the contest would be stabilized. Neith performed this exact same function as it is said that her spittle created the serpentine beast Apophis who nighttime tried to destroy the boat of the sun deity and so return the order of our universe to turmoil and, at the same time, she was the mother of the sun deity and his protector. She is represented as damaging her kid Apophis and, at the same time, creating him as she's also viewed as securing her son Ra while having actually created his arch opponent; in all of the, stability was achieved.

In the same way, Neith created birth and enlivened mankind but was also there at a person's death to help them get used to the new world of the hereafter. She helped to dress the dead and open the way for them to the hereafter and the hope of immortality and paradise in the Field of Reeds. As she was related to weaving, she ended up being linked to the goddesses Tatet and Nephthys who helped prepare the dead spirits to move forward and also with Qebhet who looked after the dead and ensured they had cool water to drink as they awaited judgment. Just like lots of, if not all, of the Egyptian godly beings, Neith was a part of an individual's life from their birth through their death and on into the hereafter. One was never ever alone in the universe as the deities were constantly watching and protecting and assisting one on one's course and that course was immortal no matter how temporal it might appear to people on earth.

[Chapter 4: Praise and Worship of the Goddess](#)

Neith was worshipped throughout ancient Egypt but most ardently at Sais and in Lower Egypt. She belonged of the Triad of Latopolis at Esna together with Khnum ("The Great Potter" who made human entities) and Heka (deity of magic and medication) replacing the female deity Menhet who may have actually been only an element of Neith. She was also worshipped as the consort of Set, deity of chaos, in another example of the importance of stability to the Egyptian religious faith. In The Contendings of Horus and Set, Neith tells the deities of the tribunal that Horus should be announced king after his father Osiris' death and resurrection and that Set should rule the wild lands beyond Egypt's border and be given two

goddesses, Anat and Astarte, as consorts to keep him company. She was also associated with Osiris and supervises his mummified body to keep it safe from Set so that Isis and Nephthys can revive him. In all these aspects, again, she's seen as keeping stability. Although she may be Set's consort, she is also good friend to his adversary Osiris and sides with Osiris' child Horus against Set in the interests of justice and consistency. This seems to have been her main role from extremely early on in Egypt's history as Wilkinson notes writing on her durability:

Neith's prominence in early dynastic times - as seen in 1st-dynasty labels, funerary stelae, and in the names of her priestesses and the modern queens just like Neithotep and Merneith - suggest the female deity was worshipped from the starter days of Egyptian culture. Even more so, the earliest portrayal of what's thought to be a holy shrine in ancient Egypt is connected with Neith.

Her association with stability can be seen in some of her iconography where she's pictured with 3 heads representing 3 points of view and also as lady with an erect phallus representing both male and female. In these depictions she is also seen with wings spread out large and arms open in a welcome of all who come to her.

Neith's clergy were female and her temple at Sais, according to Herodotus, was just one of the most outstanding in all of Egypt. Daily praise of Neith would have been in accordance with the customs concerning all of the gods where her statue in the inner sanctum of the temple would have been tended by the High Priestess (who alone could enter the room) and the other chambers taken care of by lesser priestesses. Most people who came to the temple were allowed only in the external courtyards where they offered their sacrifices to the female deity with requests for her aid or in thanks for help given.

Her annual festival was celebrated on the 13th day of the 3rd month of summer season and was referred to as The Festival of the Lamps. On this day people came from all over ancient Egypt to pay their respects to the female deity and offer her gifts. In the evening they would light lamps which, according to Herodotus, were "saucers full of salt and oil, the wick floating thereon, and burning all night" and even those who didn't attend the festival lighted such

lamps in their houses, in other temples, and in the palaces so that the whole of ancient Egypt would be lit up all night long (Histories, II.62). These lamps were thought to mirror the stars in the night sky which were said to be either godly entities or courses to those deities. At Neith's celebration the veil between the earthly world and the land of the dead was thought to part and people could see and speak with their departed friends and family. The lights on earth mirroring the stars helped to part this veil because earth and the heavens would appear the exact same to both the living and the dead. The celebration touched upon the Osiris myth and Neith's part in his resurrection as she opened the way for the dead to communicate with the living in the exact same way she had helped Isis and Nephthys bring Osiris back to life.

Wilkinson notes that "the worship of Neith covered practically all of Egypt's history and she stayed to the end 'Neith the Great'". While tons of her characteristics were given to Isis and Hathor, as formerly noted, her worship never ever declined. Even during eras where more famous godly beings received the greater attention, Neith went on to be regarded with reverence and wonder and her celebration was considered one of the most vital in ancient Egypt.

#### Chapter 5: Thoth

Thoth is the Egyptian deity of writing, magic, wisdom, and the moon. He was one of the most essential deities of old ancient Egypt alternately said to be self-created or born of the seed of Horus from the forehead of Set. As the child of these 2 godly beings, who represented order and turmoil respectively, he was also the deity of equilibrium and stability and associated closely with both the principle of ma'at (godlike stability) and the female deity Ma'at who personified this actual idea (and who was at times viewed as his spouse). Another of his consorts was the female deity Nehemetawy ('She Who Embraces Those In Need') a protector goddess. In his form or shape as A'an, Thoth presided over the judgment of the dead with Osiris in the Hall of the Truth and those living spirits who feared they may not pass through the judgment safely were encouraged to hire Thoth for help. The accompaniment usually related to Thoth was Seshat, female deity of writing, the keeper of books, and patron female deity of libraries and librarians who was at the same time his spouse or daughter.

Praise of Thoth began in Lower ancient Egypt likely in the Pre-

Dynastic Period (c. 6000-3150 BCE) and went on through the Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BCE), the last dynastic period of Egyptian history, marking Thoth's veneration as amongst the longest of the Egyptian deities or any godly being from any society. His name was generally taken by the kings of ancient Egypt (example, Tuthmoses - "Born of Thoth"), scribes, and priests. He is most very often depicted as a guy with the head of an ibis or a seated baboon with or without a lunar disc above his head. He was the client deity of scribes and it was said that scribes would pour out one drop of their ink in Thoth's honor right before they began their everyday work.

### Name & Origin

Thoth's Egyptian name was Djehuty (also dhwtj) meaning "He Who is Like the Ibis". The ibis was a holy bird in age-old ancient Egypt and also a famous family pet and related to knowledge. Other forms of his name are Jehuti, Tahuti, Tehuti, Zehuti, Techu, Tetu, and Lord of the Khemenu (the later city of Hermopolis) which was his significant cult center. Hermopolis was so named just because of the Greek association of Thoth with their deity Hermes and to the Greeks Thoth ended up being Hermes Trimegistus (Thoth the Thrice Great usually given as "Three Times Great, Great"). He was also referred to as "Lord of Ma'at", "Lord of Divine Words", "Scribe of Ma'at in the Company of the Gods", and as a simply and honorable judge.

According to one story, Thoth was born "from the lips of Ra" at the beginning of creation and was referred to as the "deity without a mom". In another tale, Thoth is self-created at the start of time and, as an ibis, lays the cosmic egg which holds all of creation. He was always closely associated with Ra and the principle of godlike order and justice. In a third story, The Contendings of Horus and Set (an Egyptian text from c. 1190-1077 BCE), when Horus and Set are defending the right to rule, Thoth is known to have been made from the semen of Horus which was inadvertently swallowed by Set during the battle. Thoth was born from Set's forehead and, in some versions, then mediated the struggle between the deities (in other versions the battle between Horus and Set is dealt with by Neith and, in others, by Isis). In every version, Thoth is the scribe who records the events of the contest and offers guidance to the gods. He heals both Horus and Set at different times in their battle in order to make sure that both sides are equally capable and none can get

benefit over the other so that the contest will be fair. In this exact same way, Thoth commanded justice on earth amongst human entities. Egyptologist Geraldine Pinch writes:

Thoth set a godly example as a just judge, and he was an honorable official. He raised Ma'at, the female deity of justice, to her dad, Ra. Thoth was accountable for framing and enforcing the laws of ma'at. In this role he could be either a thoughtful peacemaker or an unforgiving executioner.

As Thoth was credited with the creation of certain branches of knowledge (law, magic, philosophy, religious faith, science, and writing) he was thought to be a foolproof judge capable of rendering entirely just decisions. The Greeks appreciated him so considerably that they credited him as the pioneer of all knowledge on earth and in the heavens. He was so important to the gods, and especially to Ra, that he was the deity chosen to obtain Ra's daughter from the distant lands she at times ran away to.

#### Thoth & The Distant Goddess

The theme of The Distant Goddess appears in some Egyptian myths but always has the same meaning no matter who the particular female deity is or where she has gone: Ra's daughter disagrees with him on some matter and leaves him to disappear into some far off land and someone has to be sent to bring her back; on her return she brings some sort of change to the people. The Distant Goddess story also always involved the Eye of Ra, the all-seeing eye, which Ra needed every day; it was thus crucial that the female deity be revived quickly and the eye returned but she was too powerful to be forced and the job called for subtlety. Geraldine Pinch writes:

Ra chose Thoth to take this Distant Goddess back from a remote desert. Camouflaged as a baboon or monkey, Thoth achieved his task through humility, cunning, and perseverance. According to one account he needed to ask the female deity to come home 1,077 times.

As a reward for his services, Thoth was given the female deity Nehemtawy as his accompaniment who, Pinch claims, was "a pacified variation of the Distant Goddess".

Thoth was also crucial in the birth of the original 5 gods of Egypt.

When Nut conceived by Geb at the beginning of the world, Ra (also referred to as Atum) was so upset he decreed she would not give birth on any day of the year. Thoth bet with Iah, the moon god, for 5 days' worth of moonlight. He won the gamble and separated Iah's moonlight into 5 days of sunshine which were not part of the year as decreed by Ra. Nut was then able to bring to life each of her children (Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus) on each of the days. Even though Ra had been mad with his daughter, Nut, he relented and honored Thoth for his part in getting around Ra's decree. Thoth was given a seat of honor in the sky boat which crossed the heavens by day and, by night, Thoth helped to drive away the serpent Apophis who looked to damage the sun god. His participation in the conquering of Apophis connected him to the cycle of day and night and so thoroughly to the lives of people.

### Thoth & the Written Word

Thoth created the written word people used to make a record of their history and keep an eye on their daily lives. According to some stories, Thoth invented the word and gave it to the people on earth while, in others, Thoth was the creator and his accompaniment Seshat gave words to the people. In still other versions, Thoth was the developer but Osiris or Isis gave words to humanity. In every case, Thoth is the creator of written language and the fictional arts both for people and the gods. Geraldine Pinch writes:

Thoth, the "exceptional of understanding", observed and documented everything that happened and reported it to Ra every morning. As the record keeper of the gods he was coupled with the curator Seshat. Thoth and Seshat knew the future as well as the past. They engraved a person's fate on the bricks on which their mom gave birth and the length of a king's reign on the leaves of the ished tree.

Thoth was for this reason linked with the principle of fate despite the fact that this obligation was shared, in different versions of the myths from different ages, with the Seven Hathors or other deities. As the record keeper of the gods, Thoth also kept account of the days of people. He is seen in certain images monitoring the days and numbering the years by which the Egyptian scribes had the ability to make a record of the nation's history.



## Thoth as a Baboon

Scribes, naturally, claimed Thoth as their client and began every day honoring him. A statue from the 18th Dynasty shows Thoth as a baboon with the lunar disc on his head seated above a working scribe at his writing desk. The work of these scribes was, ideally, authorized of by Thoth who then gave leave to Seshat to house them in her never-ending library and secure them in earthly ones. The actual idea of writing making the author never-ending was well appreciated in ancient Egypt as a scribe's work resided on after his death through the written words in books but was also understood by the deities as Seshat kept the words in her godly books too. Scribes had every reason to really believe they would be invited warmly after death in the Hall of Truth and pass on to paradise in the Field of Reeds.

## Thoth in the Afterlife

Thoth appears very often at the side of Osiris and Anubis in the Hall of Truth as the scribe who has kept accounts of the life of the spirit of the deceased and who records the outcome of the weighing of the heart against the plume or feather of truth. Scholar Richard H. Wilkinson writes:

In vignettes of the Book of the Dead [Thoth] stands in front of the scales which weigh the heart of the deceased and record the verdict. This role gave Thoth a track record for truth and stability and is seen in the common assertion that a person had conducted his life in a way "straight and true like Thoth".

His home in the hereafter, referred to as the Mansion of Thoth, provided a safe place for spirits to rest and receive magic spells to help them against the devils who would stop them from reaching paradise. His magic was also instrumental in the revitalization of the spirit which brought the dead back to life in the underworld. The association of writing with magic gave rise to the faith that Thoth had written magic treatises based upon all he knew of the paradises, the earth, and the hereafter, and that these books were hidden away to be found by the starts of later generations. Pinch writes:

All funerary spells could be regarded as works of Thoth. A tradition grew up that Thoth had written forty-two books consisting of all of the knowledge needed by humanity. Some of this was occult

knowledge to be revealed only to initiates who would not misuse the power it provided them. The Greeks determined Thoth with their messenger god, Hermes. The body of literature referred to as the Hermetica said to maintain the mentors of Hermes Trismegistus (Thoth the Thrice Great). Hermes Trismegistus was ultimately reinterpreted as a great thinker who had lived countless years in the past.

This claim regarding Thoth and the 42 books was first made by the church dad Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215 CE) who made a record of in his Stromata that they were written by the deity Hermes. Hermes the deity was later understood as Hermes the wise man and in largely this way the Book of Thoth has entered into present understanding. Fictional representations of the Book of Thoth - written either by the Egyptian god, the Greek god, or the Greek sage - have appeared in books and films throughout the past century. The ongoing interest in Thoth and his far-ranging knowledge is a testimony to his long-lasting appeal.

#### Thoth Statue Praise of Thoth & Legacy

Thoth's primary center of worship was at Hermopolis but he was widely venerated throughout the land of Egypt. As with other gods, his temples and shrines would have functioned as a focal point for the community and a resource for counsel, spiritual advice, and general aid in procuring food or health attention. The priests of Thoth were highly informed scribes and his cult was closely connected with the gentility. It was actually not only the monarchy or the informed elite who appreciated Thoth, though, as Wilkinson indicates:

Thoth's manifestation in the names of several New Kingdom emperors shows crucial royal acceptance and patronage of the god's cult, but earlier references to sacrifices made in private burial places on the festival of Thoth also show the importance of this deity to non-royal people and his worship appears to have always had a wide base among age-old Egyptians ... Amulets of the deity as an ibis or an ibis-headed man - at times holding the godly wedjat eye, while those illustrating him as a baboon were more common. These amulets were worn in life, many presumably by scribes. The wisdom and magical powers ascribed to Thoth meant that he was naturally invoked in a lot of spells utilized in famous magic and

faith (216-217).

His cult center at Hermopolis was incredibly preferred. Mummified ibises and baboons were sold to pilgrims coming to the festival as votive sacrifices to the gods. Excavations of the near necropolis of Tuna el-Gebel revealed countless these mummified animals. Wilkinson writes, "Another big burial ground for ibises and baboons lay at Saqqara and these catacombs well highlight the continued extensive appeal of Thoth in the faith of the later periods. Thoth's enduring veneration is also recognized through the number of amulets to him which have been found from different time periods throughout Egypt's history.

Even today, Thoth is recognized as a crucial spiritual entity. Aside from those in the New Age, Wiccan, or Neo-Pagan communities who revere the god, he is just one of the better recognized Egyptian deities in pop culture. The University of Cairo includes Thoth on his throne as their logo and statuary of the deity remains one of the most preferred and recognizable, after images of King Tutankhamun, Queen Nefertiti, and the female deity Bastet, in the present world.

#### [Chapter 6: Horus](#)

Horus is the name of a sky deity in old Egyptian folklore which designates mostly two deities: Horus the Elder (or Horus the Great), the last born of the first 5 original gods, and Horus the Younger, the child of Osiris and Isis. According to the historian Jimmy Dunn, "Horus is the most vital of the bird godly beings" who takes on so many forms and is depicted so differently in various inscriptions that "it is almost impossible to differentiate the 'true' Horus. Horus is mostly a general term for a variety of falcon godly entities". While this is certainly true, the name 'Horus' will usually be found to designate either the older deity of the first five or the child of Isis and Osiris who beat his uncle Set and restored order to the land.

The name Horus is the Latin variation of the Egyptian Hor which means "the Distant One", a recommendation to his role as a sky god. The senior Horus, brother of Osiris, Isis, Set, and Nephthys, is called Horus the Great in English or Harwer and Haroeris in Egyptian. The son of Osiris and Isis is referred to as Horus the Child (Hor pa khered) who was changed into the Greek deity Harpocrates after Alexander the Great dominated ancient Egypt in 331 BCE.

'Harpocrates' also means 'Horus the Kid' but the godly being varied from the Egyptian Horus. Harpocrates was the Greek deity of silence and privacy, the keeper of tricks, whose statuary regularly illustrates him as a winged kid with his finger to his lips.

Horus the Younger, on the other hand, was an effective sky deity related to the sun, mainly, but also the moon. He was the protector of the royalty of Egypt, avenger of wrongs, defender of order, uniter of the two lands and, based on his fights with Set, a deity of war very often invoked by Egyptian rulers right before fight and applauded later on. In time, he ended up being integrated with the sun deity Ra to form or shape a brand-new godly being, Ra-Harakhete, deity of the sun who sailed across the sky during the day and was illustrated as a falcon-headed man wearing the double crown of Upper and Lower ancient Egypt with the sun disk on it. His signs are the Eye of Horus (one of the most preferred Egyptian symbols) and the falcon.

### Horus the Elder

The older Horus is one of the oldest gods of Egypt, born of the union between Geb (earth) and Nut (sky) quickly after the creation of the world. His older brother Osiris was given the responsibility of governing the earth along with Isis while Horus was given charge of the sky and, particularly, the sun. In another version of the story, Horus is the son of Hathor while, in others, she's his female spouse and, in some cases, she is mom, marriage partner, and daughter of Horus. The expert Geraldine Pinch notes that "one of the earliest godly pictures understood from ancient Egypt is that of a falcon in a barque" representing Horus in the sun barge taking a trip across the paradises. Horus is also illustrated as a developer deity and kindhearted protector.

There were many falcon gods (referred to as Bird Divine beings) in Egyptian faith who were eventually absorbed into the deity referred to as Horus. Some, like Dunanwi from Upper Egypt, appear early in history while others, like Montu, were famous later. Horus' early association with Dunanwi has been challenged by experts but there is no doubt he was later integrated with the deity as Horus-Anubis. Dunanwi was a regional deity of the 18th upper nome (province) while Horus was widely worshipped throughout the nation. It's possible that, like Inanna in Mesopotamia, the figure of Horus

started as a local deity just like Dunanwi but it appears more likely that Horus was completely realized early in Egypt's religious development.

Egyptologist Richard H. Wilkinson talk about how "Horus was just one of the earliest of Egyptian deities. His name is verified from the start of the Dynastic Period and it is possible that early falcon deities like that shown restraining the' marsh residents 'on the Narmer Combination represent this exact same god". Rulers of the Predynastic Period in ancient Egypt (c. 6000-3150 BCE) were called "Followers of Horus" which vouches for an even earlier point of veneration in Egypt's history.

In his role as The Distant One he performs the exact same job as The Distant Goddess, a function connected with Hathor (and certain other female godly entities) who go forth from Ra and return, bringing transformation. The sun and the moon were considered Horus' eyes as he watched over the people of the world day and night but could also approach to them in times of trouble or doubt. Pictured as a falcon, he could fly far from Ra and return with important information and, in the same way, could rapidly bring comfort to those in need.

From the Early Dynastic Period (c. 3150-c.2613 BCE) onwards, Horus was related to the king of ancient Egypt (however later rulers associated themselves with Horus the Younger). Historian Margaret Bunson writes, "The Serekh, the earliest of the king's signs, illustrated a falcon (or hawk) on a perch. As a result, dedication to Horus spread out throughout ancient Egypt but in numerous areas the forms, customs, and routines honoring the deity differed greatly". This variation triggered certain different epithets and roles for this godly being and eventually caused his change from the elder Horus to the kid of Osiris and Isis.

### Horus the Younger & The Osiris Myth

The more youthful Horus is in some cases pointed out as related to the older deity but rapidly eclipsed him and presumed a lot of his traits. By the time of the Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE), the last dynasty to rule Egypt, the older Horus had been entirely replaced by the younger. Statues of Horus the Kid from the Ptolemaic period show him as a young kid with his finger to his lips maybe representing the time when he had to stay quiet when hiding from

his uncle Set as a child. In his young form or shape he "came to represent a promise by the gods to take care of suffering the people on earth" since he had himself suffered as a child and knew how it felt to be delicate and surrounded by threats (Pinch, 147). It was this form or shape of Horus who would become the Greek Harpocrates whom Plutarch called "the second child of Isis" and who would go on to become preferred in the Roman world. The Cult of Isis was the most famous secret cult in Rome, considerably influencing the development of Christianity, and Harpocrates was the godly son depicted in ancient Roman art with his mom.

### Isis Figurine

The story of Horus comes out of the Osiris Myth which was just one of the most famous in age-old ancient Egypt and triggered the Cult of Isis. This story begins soon after the creation of the world when Osiris and Isis ruled over a paradise they created. When males and females were born from the tears of Atum (Ra) they were uncivilized and barbaric. Osiris taught them culture, religious observances to honor the gods, and the art of farming. The people were all equal at this time, women and men, owing to the gifts of Isis which were given to all. Food was plentiful and there was no really want or really need unsatisfied.

Osiris' brother, Set, grew jealous of him and this envy turned to hatred when Set discovered that his female spouse, Nephthys, had transformed herself into the similarity of Isis and seduced Osiris. Set was actually not mad with Nephthys, though, but focused his vengeance on his brother, "The Beautiful One", who had presented a temptation too strong for Nephthys to resist. Set fooled Osiris into putting down in a coffin he had made to his brother's particular particularations and, once Osiris was inside, Set slammed the lid on and threw the box into the Nile.

The casket drifted down the river to eventually lodge in a tamarisk tree by the coasts of Byblos where the king and queen appreciated its beauty and sweet aroma and had it lowered for a pillar in their court. While this was going on, Set has taken over Osiris' rule and reigned over the land with Nephthys. He ignored the gifts which Osiris and Isis had bestowed and the land suffered drought and famine. Isis knew she had to bring Osiris back from any place Set had eliminated him to and went out searching for him. She finally

found him inside the tree-pillar at Byblos, asked the king and queen for it, and brought it back to Egypt

Divine Family from Ancient Egypt.

Osiris was dead but Isis knew she could bring him back to life. She asked her sister Nephthys to stand guard over the body and protect it from Set while she went to collect herbs for potions. Set, meanwhile, had heard that his brother had returned and was out trying to find him. He found Nephthys and deceived her into telling him where the body was hidden; then he hacked Osiris into pieces and spread the body parts across the land and into the Nile. When Isis came back she was frightened to find her spouse's body missing. Nephthys told her how she had been tricked and what Set had done to Osiris.

The 2 sisters then entered search of the body parts and reassembled Osiris. His penis had been eaten by a fish and so he was incomplete but Isis could still return him to life. Isis used her magic and potions and, in some versions of the story, is assisted in this by Nephthys. Osiris revived but could no longer rule amongst the living because he was no longer entire; he would have to descend to the underworld and reign there as Lord of the Dead. Prior to his departure, though, Isis transformed herself into a kite (a falcon) and flew around his body, drawing his seed into her own and becoming pregnant with Horus. Osiris left for the underworld and Isis went into hiding in the Delta area of ancient Egypt to secure herself and her child from Set.

Horus & Isis

Isis endured a challenging pregnancy with exceptionally long labor and gave birth to Horus alone in the swamps of the Delta. She hid herself and her child from Set and his devils in the thickets, only heading out in the evening for food accompanied by a bodyguard of 7 scorpions who were given her by the female deity Selket. Selket (and, in some versions of the story, Neith) watched over Horus while Isis headed out. Isis, Selket, and Neith nurtured Horus and informed him in their exile till he was grown to manhood and was strong enough to challenge his uncle for his dad's kingdom.

The story of the battles between Horus and Set have many different versions but the best understood is from a document dating to the 20th Dynasty (1090-1077 BCE), The Contendings of Horus and Set

which defines their contest as a legal trial in front of the Ennead, a tribunal of nine effective gods. In this version of the story, Horus brings a grievance against Set - who is just one of the nine - declaring he has unlawfully taken the throne from Osiris - who is also one of the 9 judges. The tribunal is asked to decide between Horus and Set and the majority of the deities choose Horus but Ra, the supreme god, claims that Horus is too young and unskilled and Set has the better claim to rule. Horus and Set should compete in a series of battles to prove which is best able to reign. In the course of these battles, Horus loses an eye and Set is castrated (or, at least, significantly harmed) but Horus is triumphant every time.

### Set Defeated by Horus

These contests go on for over 80 years and Ra continues to deny Horus his right to the throne. Meanwhile, the land is suffering under Set's rule and Isis is desperate to do something to help her son and her people. She changes herself into a stunning young woman and takes a seat in front of Set's palace where she starts to cry. When Set comes out and sees her, he asks the reason for her sadness and she tells him how a wicked man, her spouse's own brother, has killed him and taken his land and, farther, seeks the life of her only son and has eradicated her to the swamp lands and the thickets where only the scorpions are her buddies.

Set is outraged by her story and declares that this man ought to be punished. He swears that he, himself, will go find this man and cast him from the lands and bring back the woman and her kid to their rightful place. Isis then shakes off her camouflage and exposes herself and the other gods in attendance. Set has condemned himself by his own decree and Ra concurs with the other deities that Horus should be king. Set is then banished to the desert lands beyond Egypt's borders while Horus assumes the throne of his dad with his mother and auntie Nephthys as consorts.

In another version of the story, the trial lasts for 80 years till the frustrated deities turn to the smart female deity Neith, conciliator of disputes, who rules in favor of Horus. She suggests that Set be given reign of the desert areas while Horus rules the fertile Nile River Valley. As an alleviation, she proposes, Set should also be given two foreign goddesses as accompaniments - the warrior-female deity Anat from Syria and Astarte, the Queen of Heaven, from Phoenicia.



This variation of the story explained how Set happened related to people of foreign lands as well as the desert areas.

### Horus & the King

Having actually dominated Set and brought back order, Horus became referred to as Horu-Sema-Tawy, The Horus, Uniter of the Two Lands. He restored the policies of his mom and dad, invigorating the land, and ruled sensibly. It is for this reason that kings of Egypt, from the First Dynastic Period on, aligned themselves with Horus and chose a "Horus Name" to rule under at their coronation. Osiris had been the first king of ancient Egypt who established order and then passed on to the underworld while Horus was the king who brought back that order after it was reversed by Set and who raised ancient Egypt up from turmoil to harmony. Egyptian kings, thus, identified themselves with Horus in life and Osiris in death. During their reign, they were the physical manifestation of Horus under the protection of Isis (a notable departure from this customized being the king Peribsen, 6th king of the 2nd Dynasty, who aligned himself clearly with Set). Ramesses II famously conjures up the protection of Isis and Horus in his Poem of Pentaur following the Battle of Kadesh in 1274 BCE as do a lot of other kings and pharaohs of Egypt. Wilkinson writes:

Horus was straight related to the kingship of ancient Egypt in both his falcon form or shape aspect and as child of Isis. From the earliest Dynastic Period the king's name was written in the rectangle-shaped gadget referred to as the serekh which depicted the Horus falcon perched on a stylized palace enclosure and which appears to show the king as conciliator between the heavenly and earthly realms, if not the deity manifest within the palace as the king himself. To this "Horus Name" of the king, other titles were later added, which includes the "Golden Horus" name in which a godly falcon is portrayed upon the hieroglyphic sign for gold.

Since the king of ancient Egypt was the 'great home' who safeguarded his people, all of the people of ancient Egypt were under the security of Horus. He was worshipped in tons of forms and in several sites. Wilkinson notes that, "Horus was worshipped along with other godly entities in lots of Egyptian temples and important sites of his praise are known from one end of ancient Egypt to the other". His importance as the uniter of the 2 lands and maintainer

of order made him a depiction of the principle of stability which was highly valued by the Egyptians.

### Praise of Horus.

Horus was worshipped in the same way as any of the other gods of Egypt: temples were built as houses for the deity and his statue put within the inner sanctum where only the chief priest was permitted to attend him. The clergy of the Horus Cult were always male as they associated themselves with Horus and said security from their mother 'Isis. Attendant priests looked after the temple complex which, like any other, was constructed to mirror the hereafter of the Field of Reeds. The reflecting pool of the temple was Lily Lake (also called The Lake of Flowers) which the spirits of the justified dead were rowed across by the godly ferryman Hraf-hef ('He-Who-Looks-Behind-Himself'). The temple was the hereafter palace and home of the deity and the yard, embellished with flowers, was his garden.

### Ra-Horakhty Stela

The people of ancient Egypt would come to the courtyard to request support or to get alms, provide donations or have their dreams translated. They would also visit the temple for advice, analysis of prophecies, medical help, marriage therapy, and for security from fiends or ghosts. The sites of the praise of Horus, as Wilkinson notes above, are too many to list but the significant cult centers were Khem, in the Delta area, where Horus was hidden as a child, Pe, the site where Horus lost his eye in his battle with Set, and Behdet (both also in the Delta). In Upper ancient Egypt he was worshipped along with Hathor and their child Harsomptus at Edfu and Kom Ombos. Edfu hosted the yearly Crowning of the Spiritual Falcon "in which a real falcon was chosen to represent the deity as king of all Egypt, thus joining the old falcon deity with his form or shape as Horus child of Osiris and with the king" (Wilkinson, 202). This event, like other royal festivals, had to do with empowerment of the king and rejuvenation of his reign but was not as important as the Heb Sed Celebration. Horus was also venerated at Abu Simbel through statuary and engravings and amulets were regularly used by people seeking his protection.

### The Four Sons of Horus

This protection extended through life and beyond death. Horus was related to the hereafter through his Four Sons who secured the important organs of the deceased. These 4 gods represented the four

cardinal points of the compass and each was commanded and safeguarded by a goddess. The 4 Sons of Horus were:

Duamutef - a jackal deity who secured the stomach, represented the east, and was safeguarded by Neith.

Hapy - a baboon deity who safeguarded the lungs, represented the north, and was secured by Nephthys.

Imsety - a deity in human form or shape who secured the liver, represented the south, and was safeguarded by Isis.

Qebehsenuef - a hawk deity who safeguarded the intestinal tracts, represented the west, and was secured by Selket.

These organs were held in canopic jars which at times had the head of the protector-deity as the lid handle. The most famous example of the canopic protectors is the alabaster artifact from the tomb of Tutankhamun in which Isis, Neith, Nephthys, and Selket are carved. All 4 of the protector-gods were illustrated as mummified men with their particular different heads of jackal, baboon, human, and hawk. These were all seen as manifestations of Horus who was a friend to the dead. Horus was conjured up at funerals for defense and assistance for the ones that had departed and for the living who stayed behind.

### Horus & Jesus Debate

The Cult of Horus in Egypt, as noted, was already ancient by the time the Osiris Myth ended up being famous and that myth raised the worship of Osiris, Isis and Horus to a national level. The Cult of Isis ended up being so famous that worship of the female deity took a trip through trade to Greece and then to Rome where it ended up being the greatest difficulty to the new religious faith of Christianity in the 3rd-5th centuries CE. Horus took a trip with her in the form or shape of Horus the Child and influenced Christian iconography of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Kid.

There is no doubt the worship of Isis affected early Christianity through the ideas of the Dying and Restoring God who returns from the dead to bring life to the people, eternal life through commitment to that god, the image of the virgin mom and child, and even the red-hue and traits of the Christian devil. This isn't to say, however, that Christianity is simply the Isis Cult re-packaged nor that Horus was the prototype for the increased Christ.

### Isis Nursing Horus

The book *The Pagan Christ* by Tom Harpur (2004) makes this really claim, however, and has generated the so-called Horus-Jesus Debate also referred to as the Child of God Debate. Harpur claims that Christianity was invented entirely from Egyptian folklore and that Jesus Christ is simply Horus re-imagined. To support his claim, Harpur cites 'experts' on the subject just like Godfrey Higgins, Gerald Massey, and Alvin Boyd Kuhn, all authors from the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, none of whom were scriptural experts or Egyptologists. Higgins was an English magistrate who actually believed all religions came from the Lost City of Atlantis; Massey, a self-styled Egyptologist, was an English spiritualist who studied readily available inscriptions at the British Museum; Kuhn was a self-published author whose main focus was promoting his Christ Myth Theory which was essentially just a re-write of the work done by Higgins and Massey.

Harpur presents these 'experts' as if they had discovered something amazing and unusual when, in reality, their observations are generally inaccurate re-treads of earlier works (like, for example, those of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius) or extremely speculative theories presented as if they're dazzling insights. The Dying and Restoring God actual idea had existed for thousands of years before the apostle Paul began his evangelical efforts c. 42-62 CE and the actual idea of eternal life through personal dedication to a deity was equally well established. Harpur's book presents certain extremely serious issues to any reader acquainted with the Bible, Christianity, and Egyptian Mythology and history but his most serious offense is the claim that Horus and Jesus share "remarkable resemblances".

This claim, which is rather clearly incorrect to anyone who knows the stories of the 2 figures, has become the best known of the book. Regrettably, many readers who do not know the original stories take Harpur's claims as legitimate scholarship when they're not. To point out just a couple of examples, Harpur asserts that both Horus and Jesus were born in a cavern - this is incorrect, Horus was born in the Delta swamps and Jesus in a steady; both births were revealed by an angel - also false, as the idea of the angel, a messenger of God, is missing from Egyptian faiths; Horus and Jesus were both baptized - false, baptism was not practiced by Egyptians; both Horus and Jesus were lured in the wilderness - false, Horus

fought Embed in several areas, and that includes the arid desert while the gospel stories explain that Jesus was tempted in the desert or the wilderness; Horus and Jesus were both visited by 3 Wise Guys - incorrect, Horus is never visited by wise men and, even more harmful to Harpur's 'scholarship', there are not 'three sensible guys' pointed out in the Bible which only references 'smart men' who bring three types of gifts; Horus and Jesus both raised the dead back to life - false, Horus had absolutely nothing to do with raising Osiris or anyone else from the dead.

Further, Egyptian religions would have turned down any such principle as a dead person returning to life on earth. Even Osiris, the great deity and first king, was not enabled to go back to his put on earth after death; he took his place amongst the dead, where he belonged. The Egyptian understanding of life on this earth was that it was only one part of a much longer immortal journey and no one would have been invited back who had already departed for the hereafter. Further, no Egyptian would have wanted to; the Egyptian hereafter was a mirror image of someone's life in the world except it lacked frustration, loss, and death. Anyone or item one had left on earth was found again in the Field of Reeds, whether an individual's deceased loved ones, pets, and even a person's favorite tree in one's garden.

#### Horus the Redeemer

All of Harpur's more claims are equally illogical owing to extremely poor expertship and a reliance on sources which aren't reliable. Neither Horus nor Jesus take advantage of his substandard comparison of their lives. The actual idea of Horus as redeemer was well established in ancient Egypt but this doesn't always necessarily mean that idea was unique to him nor that there were not other 'redeemers' in between the time of the preferrency of Horus and the development of Christianity. Horus was a redeemer of health and human entities in their earthly form; not of spirits needing salvation from sin and immortal punishment. Horus the Child was one of certain so-called 'child gods' of old ancient Egypt who appeared in the form or shape referred to as Shed (Savior) but was a rescuer from earthly difficulties, not eternal ones. Geraldine Pinch writes:

He appeared on stelae of the late New Kingdom impersonated a prince who beat harmful animals with his bow or curved sword. This was a forerunner of the type of magic stela referred to as a

cippus. On these, the naked Horus kid tramples on crocodiles and squeezes the life out of other dangerous beings like, for example, serpents, lions, and antelopes. When the Greeks saw such objects, they determined Horus the Child/Harpocrates with the infant Herakles (Hercules) who strangled 2 serpents that assaulted him in his cradle.

Horus also, through his 4 Sons, supervised and was a good friend to the dead but was primarily a deity of the living. He was the distant deity who could draw close in time of need, the reputable good friend, the caring brother, the protector, and someone's guide through the hazards of life. He shares these traits and traits with other deities in cultures around the globe up through the present day but to the Egyptians he was completely special since he was their own; as it is and has always been with any deity of any faith anywhere.

[Chapter 7: Apophis](#)

Apophis (also referred to as Apep) is the Great Snake, nemesis of the sun deity Ra, in old Egyptian religious faith. The sun was Ra's great barge which cruised through the sky from dawn to dusk and after that descended into the underworld. As it navigated through the darkness of night, it was assaulted by Apophis who tried to kill Ra and prevent daybreak. On board the great ship certain different gods and goddesses are illustrated in varying eras as well as the warranted dead and all of these helped ward off the serpent.

Ancient Egyptian priests and laypeople would engage in rituals to safeguard Ra and destroy Apophis and, through these observances, linked the living with the dead and the natural order as established by the gods. Apophis never ever had an official cult and was never ever worshiped, but he would include in a number of tales handling his efforts to damage the sun deity and return order to chaos. Apophis is connected with earthquakes, thunder, darkness, storms, and death, and is sometimes connected to the deity Set, also related to chaos, disorder, storms, and darkness. Set was originally a protector god, though, and appears some times as the greatest of the gods on board the sun god's barque, safeguarding the ship against Apophis.

Although there were likely stories about a great enemy-serpent earlier in Egypt's history, Apophis actually appears by name in texts

from the Middle Kingdom (2040-1782 BCE) and is acknowledged as an unsafe force through the Late Period of Ancient Egypt (525-332 BCE), particularly, and on into the Ptolemaic Period (323-30 BCE) and Roman Egypt. Most of the texts which mention him originate from the New Kingdom (c. 1570-1069 BCE), and that includes the one referred to as The Book of Overthrowing Apophis which includes the routines and spells for beating and damaging the snake. This work is among the best known of the so-called Execration Texts, works written to accompany routines denouncing and cursing a person or entity which remained in usage throughout ancient Egypt's history.

### Ra Travelling Through the Underworld

Apophis is in some cases illustrated as a coiled serpent but, usually, as dismembered, being cut into pieces, or under attack. A famous depiction along these lines originates from Spell 17 of The Egyptian Book of the Dead in which the great cat Mau kills Apophis with a knife. Mau was the godlike cat, a personification of the sun god, who secured the Tree of Life which held the tricks of eternal life and godly knowledge. Mau existed at the act of creation, embodying the protective element of Ra, and was considered amongst his greatest defenders throughout the New Kingdom of Egypt.

Egyptologist Richard H. Wilkinson reprints an image in his book The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt from the tomb of Inerkhau at Deir el-Medina in which Mau is seen safeguarding the Tree of Life from Apophis as he slices into the great snake's head with his blade. The accompanying text, from Spell 17 of the Book of the Dead, relates how the cat defends Ra and also provides the beginning of the cat in Egypt; it was godlyly created at the start of time by the will of the gods.

### Mythological Origins

According to the most famous creation myth, the deity Atum was standing on the prehistoric mound, amidst the swirling waters of mayhem, and started the work of creation. The deity Heka, personification of magic, was with him, and it was through the agency of magic that order rose from mayhem and the first sunrise appeared. A variation on this myth has the female deity Neith arise from the primal waters and, again with Heka, start creation. In both

versions, which come from the Casket Texts, Apophis makes his earliest mythological manifestation.

### Book of the Dead Papyrus

In the story concerning Atum, Apophis has always existed and swam in the dark waters of undifferentiated turmoil before the ben-ben (the primordial mound) rose up from them. Once creation was started, Apophis was angered because of the intro of duality and order. Prior to creation, everything was a merged whole, but after, there were opposites like water and land, light and dark, male and female. Apophis became the enemy of the sun deity because the sun was the first sign of the created world and symbolized godlike order, light, life, and if he could swallow the sun god, he could return the world to a unity of darkness.

The version in which Neith develops the ordered world is comparable but with a considerable difference: Apophis is a created being who is given life at the same moment as creation. He is, therefore, not the equal of the earliest deities but their subordinate. In this story, Neith appears from the chaotic waters of darkness and spits some out as she steps onto the ben-ben. Her saliva ends up being the huge snake who then swims away before it can be caught. When Neith belonged of the waters of darkness, as in the other tale, every little thing was merged; now, however, there was diversity. Apophis goal was to return our universe to its original, undifferentiated state.

### Order vs. Mayhem

One of the most preferred fictional actual ideas of the Middle Kingdom of ancient Egypt was order vs. chaos which can be seen in a number of the most famous works. The Admonitions of Ipuwer, for example, contrasts the turmoil of the storyteller's present with a best 'golden era' of the past and the Discourse In Between a Guy and his Soul does the exact same on a more personal level. It isn't unexpected, for this reason, to find the Apophis myth emerging during this period since it characterizes this motif. The gods, the forces of order, get the help of the people on earth to defend light against darkness and life against death; in essence, to maintain duality and uniqueness against unity and collectivity.

The personality of a person was highly valued in Egyptian culture. All the gods were portrayed with their own characters and even



lower deities and spirits had their own unique characters. The autobiographies engraved on stelae and tombs was to guarantee that the person buried there, that particular individual and their accomplishments, would never be forgotten. Apophis, then, represented every little thing the Egyptians feared: darkness, oblivion, and the loss of a person's identity.

### Overthrowing Apophis

The Egyptians really believed that all of nature was imbued with divinity and this, naturally, included the sun which gave life. Eclipses and cloudy days were concerning as it was thought the sun deity was having issues bringing his ship back up into the sky. The reason for these issues was always Apophis who had in some way overcome the deities on board. Throughout the latter part of the New Kingdom era, the text referred to as The Book of Overthrowing Apophis was set down from earlier oral traditions in which, according to Egyptologist Geraldine Pinch:

The most terrifying deities in the Egyptian pantheon were evoked to fight the turmoil serpent and destroy all the aspects of his being, just like his body, his name, his shadow, and his magic. Priests acted out this unending war by drawing photos or making models of Apophis. These were cursed and then destroyed by stabbing, trampling, and burning.

Long before the text was written, however, the ritual was enacted. No matter how many times Apophis was beat and killed, he always rose again to life and attacked the sun god's boat. The most effective gods and goddesses would beat the serpent in the course of every night, but during the day, as the sun deity cruised slowly right across the sky, Apophis regenerated and was ready again by sunset to resume the war. In a text referred to as the Book of Gates, the goddesses Isis, Neith, and Serket, assisted by other godly beings, capture Apophis and restrain him in nets held down by monkeys, the sons of Horus, and the great earth deity Geb, where he is then chopped into pieces; the next night, however, the snake is entire again and waiting for the barge of the sun when it goes into the underworld.

### Mehen

Although the gods were all-powerful, they needed all of the help they could get when it came to Apophis. The warranted dead who

had been confessed to paradise are often seen on the celestial ship helping to defend it. Spell 80 of the Coffin Texts makes it possible for the deceased to take part the defense of the sun deity and his ship. Set, as noted earlier, is one of the first to drive Apophis off with his spear and club. The snake deity Mehen is also seen on board springing at Apophis to protect Ra. The Egyptian parlor game mehen, in fact, is thought to have originated from Mehen's role aboard the sun barque. In addition to the living dead spirits, though, the living also played a part. Egyptologist Margaret Bunson defines the ritual:

The Egyptians assembled in the temples to make pictures of the snake in wax. They spat on the images, burned them and mutilated them. Cloudy days or storms were indications that Apophis was picking up speed, and solar eclipses were particular times of terror for the Egyptians, as they were translated as a sign of Ra's death. The sun deity arised triumphant every time, however, and the people went on with their prayers and anthems.

Each morning the sun arose again and crossed the sky and, watching it, the people would know they had played a part in the gods' triumph over the forces of darkness and chaos. The first act of the priests in the temples across ancient Egypt was the routine of Lighting the Fire which re-enacted the first sunrise. This was performed prior to dawn in defiance of Apophis' desire to off the light of creation and return all to darkness.

Following Lighting the Fire came the second most vital early morning ritual, Drawing the Bolt, in which the high priests unlocked and unlocked to the inner sanctum where the deity lived. These 2 rituals both related to Apophis: Lighting the Fire hired the light of creation to empower Ra and Drawing the Bolt woke the deity of the temple from sleep to take part defending the barque of the sun against the great snake.

## Conclusion

Routines surrounding Apophis continued through the Late Period, in which they seem to be taken more seriously than they were previously, and on through the Roman Period. These routines, in which the people struggled alongside the gods against the forces of darkness, were not particular only to Apophis. The celebrations celebrating the resurrection of Osiris included the entire community

who participated as 2 women, playing the parts of Isis and Nephthys, called on Osiris to wake and return to life. At the king's Sed Festival, and others, participants enacted the armies of Horus and Embed in mock battles re-enacting the triumph of Horus (order) over Set (turmoil). At Hathor's celebration, people were motivated to drink to excess in re-enacting the time of disorder and damage when Ra sent Sekhmet to destroy humanity but then repented. He had a pretty large barrel of beer, colored red, set down in Sekhmet's path at Dendera, and she, thinking it was blood, drank it, ended up being intoxicated, and lost consciousness. When she woke, she was the mild Hathor who then brought back order and ended up being a friend to the people on earth.

These rituals encouraged the understanding that people played an crucial role in the operations of the vast universe. The sun was actually not just an impersonal thing in the sky which appeared to rise up every morning and set every evening but was imbued with character and purpose: it was the barge of the sun deity who, throughout the day, guaranteed the continuation of life and, at night, needed the prayers and support of the people to guarantee they would see him the next day. The routines surrounding the conquer of Apophis represented the immortal struggle between good and wicked, order and turmoil, light and darkness, and relied upon the everyday attention and efforts of human entities to be successful. Mankind, then, was not just a passive recipient of the gifts of the gods but an essential part in the operation of the whole universe.

This understanding was preserved, and these routines observed, until the rise of Christianity in the fourth century CE. At this time, the old model of mankind as co-workers with the deities was replaced by a new one in which people were fallen beings, unworthy of their godly being, and absolutely reliant on their god's son and his sacrifice for their redemption. Human beings were now considered receivers of a gift they had not made and didn't deserve, and the sun lost its unique personality and purpose to become another of the Christian god's creations. Apophis, however, would live on in Christian iconography and folklore, merged with other deities like, for example, Set and the benign snake Sata, as the enemy of God, Satan, who also worked relentlessly to overturn

godly order and bring chaos.

Chapter 8: Isis

Isis is an age-old Egyptian goddess, associated with the earlier female deity Hathor, who ended up being the most preferred and long-lasting of all of the Egyptian godly beings. Her name originates from the Egyptian Eset, (" the seat") which referred to her stability and also the throne of ancient Egypt as she was considered the mother of every pharaoh through the king's association with Horus, Isis' son. Her name has also been interpreted as Queen of the Throne, and her original headdress was the empty throne of her killed male spouse Osiris. Her signs are the scorpion (who kept her safe when she was in hiding), the kite (a type of falcon whose shape she assumed in bringing her male spouse back to life), the empty throne, and the sistrum. She is routinely represented as the unselfish, giving, mother, partner, and protectress, who positions other's interests and well-being ahead of her own. She was also called Weret-Kekau (" the Great Magic") for her power and Mut-Netjer, "Mom of the Gods" but was known by lots of names depending on which role she was fulfilling at the moment. As the female deity who brought the yearly inundation of the Nile which fertilized the land, she was Sati, for example, and as the female deity who created and maintained life she was Ankhet, and so forth.

In time, she became so preferred that all deities were considered simple aspects of Isis and she was the only Egyptian deity worshiped by everyone in the nation. She and her male spouse and son changed the Theban Triad of Amon, Mut, and Khons, who had been the most famous trinity of deities in Egypt. Osiris, Isis, and Horus are referred to as the Abydos Triad. Her cult started in the Nile Delta and her most vital sanctuary was there at the shrine of Behbeit El-Hagar, but worship of Isis eventually spread to all parts of Egypt. Both women and men served Isis as clergy and no doubt rituals concerning her praise were performed along the lines of other godly beings: a temple was built as her earthly home which housed her statue and this image was reverently cared for by the priests and priestesses. The people of ancient Egypt were encouraged to check out the temple to leave sacrifices and make supplications but nobody other than the high priest or priestess was allowed into the sanctuary where the statue of the female deity resided.

Beyond this, though, little is known of the details of the routines surrounding her worship. Like the Eleusinian Mysteries, the Cult of Isis turned into a Mystery Religion guaranteeing the tricks of life and death to starts, who were then testified secrecy. It is known that the cult promised eternal life to those who were admitted to its secrets. The people who worshiped her throughout ancient Egypt might or might not have been full initiates into her cult and, in either case, left no record of how the female deity was honored. It was actually not till Isis was worshiped in Rome that people wrote something about the cult to any great degree and already it was clear that knowledge of the rituals included was only for starts. Her temple on the island of Philae in Upper ancient Egypt would stay an active trip site for countless years till closed in the 6th century CE by the Christian emperor Justinian. In her role as "throne goddess", she was considered the mom of all kings, but her benevolence was not limited to royalty.

She is portrayed in some stories and inscriptions as a homeless woman, an old woman, a female spouse looking for and grieving her lost spouse, a mother grieving a missing kid, lady fighting for her family, and all of these stories determined her with the typical people of ancient Egypt and their darkest moment; just because of the, Isis became the female deity of all the people of Egypt, male and female, royal and common, alike. Together with her spouse Osiris, he taught humans the arts of farming and medicine and instituted the practice of marriage.

Eventually, she became related to the sea and was a protectress of sailors and merchants who wore talismans honoring her and invoked her help in times of trouble (vouched for by archaeological evidence). Unlike the other gods of ancient Egypt, Isis went beyond national borders and was worshiped by the Greeks and the Romans who really believed in her as the supreme deity who created the world. Her cult in Rome was the best competitor to the young faith of Christianity, which drew upon the image of Isis and the child-deity Horus for the depiction of the Madonna with the Christ kid. Her cult would stay one of the most preferred in the ancient Mediterranean until Christianity triumphed over the pagan faiths in the 4th-6th centuries CE, and worship of Isis was banned along with that of the other pagan gods.

## Mythical Origin

In mythology, Isis was born after the creation of the world. According to the most famous variation of the myth, there was once only swirling chaotic waters and darkness in the universe till, one day, a mound rose up from the seas with the deity Atum standing on it. Atum looked out on the eternal nothingness and recognized he was lonely, and so mated with his own shadow to bring to life Shu (deity of the air) and Tefnut (female deity of wetness). These 2 godly entities then left their dad alone on the primitive mound (called the ben-ben) and went off to develop the world.

Atum, alone on the hill in the midst of mayhem, wished for his kids and worried over their safety, and so he removed his eye and sent it out searching for them. This eye would later turn into one of the most renowned of all Egyptian images: the all-seeing eye (called the Udjat eye, or Eye of Ra). Shu and Tefnut returned with the eye, having could not create the world, and Atum was so happy to see them, he began to cry. As his tears fell on the fertile earth of the ben-ben, women and men emerged.

These new vulnerable entities had nowhere to live, though, and so Shu and Tefnut mated and gave birth to Geb (the earth) and Nut (the sky). These 2 rapidly fell in love and ended up being inseparable; a circumstance Atum found intolerable as they were brother and sister. He pushed Nut high above Geb and secured her there so the two lovers would have the ability to see one another but never touch again. Nut, however, was already pregnant by Geb and soon gave birth to five children: Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, and Horus (referred to as Horus the Senior Citizen). These 5 deities were given the job of handling the realm of human affairs on the earth and, from them, came all of the other gods of Egypt.

## Osiris and Set

Osiris married Isis and, as the first born, presumed rule as Lord of the Earth, with Isis as his queen and consort. The royal couple took their obligations so seriously that soon the people had a paradise to reside in with cool, hurrying streams, plenty to eat, and a perfect climate. There was no injustice in the land, all women and guys were equal, and everyone was at peace. Set was envious of his brother's power and status, however, and so conceived a strategy to get rid of him. He had a beautiful casket made to Osiris' particular

height, and then, threw a grand party where he presented this box and told the guests that whichever of them fit in it most flawlessly could have it as a gift. When Osiris put down in the coffin, Set slammed the lid on, attached it shut, and tossed it into the Nile, where it was carried away toward the sea.

### Stele of Pay

Isis was distraught when she found her partner was really missing and went looking for him all through ancient Egypt without success. Osiris, on the other hand, had traveled out to sea, and eventually his casket ended up being lodged in a great tamarisk tree growing near Byblos in Phoenicia. The tree grew quickly around the coffin till it totally included it. The king of Byblos, Malcander, came to the coast with his marriage partner Astarte and appreciated the tree and the sweet aroma which appeared to emanate from it. He ordered the tree lowered and gave his palace as a decorative pillar for the court, and there Osiris remained, trapped inside the coffin within the pillar, until he passed away.

### Resurrection of Osiris

Isis had meanwhile left ancient Egypt in search of her spouse and eventually came to Byblos, where she sat down by the shore and wept for her missing spouse. The maidens who participated in Astarte came to the shore to shower, and Isis taught them how to care for their hair and plait it. When they went back to the palace, Astarte appreciated their new hairdo and the beautiful aroma which seemed to float around them. She asked how they had thought of plaiting their hair, and the maidens told her of the mysterious woman by the shore of the sea. Astarte sent out for Isis, who was disguised as an older woman, and asked her to tend to her kids at court. Isis became particularly keen on the more youthful kid, Dictys, and thought to make him immortal by burning away his mortal weakness in a holy fire.

When Astarte entered the room one night and found her nursemaid positioning her son in the fire, she screamed, and Isis, stunned, assumed her true form or shape as the marvelous female deity (these details share in the Greek myth of Demeter at the court of Eleusis). Astarte and Malcander were frightened they would be killed and offered her any gifts she wanted. She asked for only the pillar - which he swiftly gave to her. The image of the pillar

consisting of the dead deity who would return to life was represented later throughout Egyptian society by the Djed symbol (a column with a broad base crossed by four parallel lines), which very often appears in Egyptian iconography and architecture and represents stability.

After leaving the court, Isis cut Osiris from the tree and carried his body back to ancient Egypt where she hid him from Set in the swampy region of the Nile Delta. She left him to go collect herbs to make the a potion to return him to life, leaving her sister Nephthys to safeguard the body. While she was gone, Set learned of his brother's return and headed out to find his body. He managed to get Nephthys to tell him where it was, and when he found it, he hacked it into pieces and spread it across the land and into the Nile. When Isis returned, she was horrified but quickly composed herself and went to work finding the pieces of her murdered partner. With Nephthys' help, she recuperated all of the body parts other than the penis, which had been tossed into the Nile and consumed by a fish.

Isis still was able to revive Osiris and, once he lived, she assumed the form or shape of a kite and flew around him, drew the seed from his body into her own, and conceived with a child, Horus (thus becoming a virgin mother). Despite the fact that Osiris now lived, he was insufficient and could no longer rule the land of the living. He withdrew into the hereafter where he became Lord and Judge of the Dead. Isis, fearing what Set may do to her son, hid Horus amongst the swamps of ancient Egypt until he was grown. At that point, Horus emerged as a mighty warrior and battled Set for control of the world. In some versions of the story, Set is killed but, in most, he's defeated and driven from the land. The chaos Set had released on the world was dominated by Horus, who brought back order, and then ruled with his mother and Nephthys as consorts.

### Isis and Consistency

The myth reveals the main value of Egyptian culture, which was harmony (called ma'at) uttered in stability. The Egyptians really believed that the deities depended upon them to reside in accordance with eternal values, and chief among these was ma'at, signified by the female deity of the exact same name who held the white plume of truth. If one resided in accordance with ma'at, one would enjoy a tranquil existence in the world and be rewarded in



the hereafter, when someone's heart was judged as lighter than the feather of truth, and later on be confessed to the paradise called the Field of Reeds. This idea of stability is uttered repeatedly through pictures demonstrating Isis and her twin sister Nephthys together where Isis is light, Nephthys dark; Isis is considerable, Nephthys ether and so on. Nephthys was never illustrated as evil to Isis' good but was connected with death while Isis with life and so these 2 sister-deities symbolized cosmic stability.

### The Goddess Isis

Isis personified ma'at in every story outlined her. One of the most preferred is referred to as Isis and the Seven Scorpions, which highlights Isis' compassion even to the ones who aren't kind to her. The story relates how, when Horus was an infant and Isis was hiding him in the swamp lands from Set, seven scorpions kept her company. She would sometimes head out in the evenings for food, and the scorpions would form or shape a type of bodyguard around her. 3 of them - Petet, Tjetet, and Matet - would go before her to make sure the way was safe and Set was not waiting in ambush, two were on either side of her - Mesetet and Mesetetef - and two brought up the back - Tefen and Befen, who were the most intense - in case Set originated from behind.

Whenever she left the swamp, Isis would hide her magnificence so she looked like a poor, older woman requesting alms in the town. One night, as she and her bodyguard went into the town, a very rich noblewoman looked down on them from her window and rapidly knocked her door and locked it at their method. The scorpions were angered at this affront to their mistress and decided to make the woman pay. The other 6 scorpions all surrendered their toxin to Tefen who drew it up into his stinger and awaited the right moment. In the meantime, a bad peasant woman had seen the noblewoman refuse hospitality and, even though she had little bit, offered Isis and her scorpions a location under her roofing system for the night and a basic meal.

While Isis was eating with the young woman, Tefen snuck out of the home and crept beneath the door of the home of the noblewoman where he stung her young child. The boy dropped in a stupor, and the noblewoman grabbed him up and tried to revive him but could not. She ran into the streets weeping for help, and

Isis heard her. Although the woman had refused her food and a location for the night, Isis forgave her. She didn't want the boy to pay for his mother's insult. Isis took the child in her arms and called each of the scorpions by their secret name, thus controlling them and neutralizing their power, and recited spells of great magic. The toxin vaporized, leaving the child's body, and he revived. The noblewoman was so thankful and so embarrassed of her earlier behavior, she offered all her wealth to Isis and the peasant woman.

To an ancient Egyptian hearing the tale, certain lessons could be drawn: the value of hospitality, generosity to strangers, forgiveness, refraining from acting in anger, and how the deities are just and kind no matter how undeserving an individual may be. If a great female deity like Isis could forgive the insult of the noblewoman, people should also forgive one another and help one another. In another variation of the story, the female deity Selket encouraged the scorpions to retaliate on the rich woman's child and then repents when Isis forgives the woman and heals the boy. Selket afterwards ended up being the protector of children against poisonous bites; therefore demonstrating that even a female deity could learn compassion and compassion from the example of Isis.

### Isis Beyond Egypt

When Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE) conquered ancient Egypt in 331 BCE his soldiers associated Isis with the famous Greek female deity Demeter. This association made her accessible to the people of Greece, who initiated their own routines honoring the Egyptian goddess. After Alexander's death, his general Ptolemy I Soter (367-283 BCE) took ancient Egypt as his area in the division of the spoils, and Hellenization of the Egyptian society continued. Isis was then further related to Demeter, particularly through the similarities in their stories of Demeter's missing daughter Persephone and Isis' missing male spouse, and particulars from the 2 separate stories mixed together. The Eleusinian Mysteries, the most crucial religious routine in age-old Greece, raised Demeter to the supreme position as keeper of the secrets of life and death, and Isis eventually came to take on this exact same role.

### Temple of Isis, Delos

She took a trip to Rome where she was called Queen of Heaven and connected to Demeter's equivalent, Ceres, and eventually to Venus.

Following the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BCE, and the resulting chaos of civil war, the Romans wanted to build a temple to honor Isis, not Venus, expecting her protection and guidance through the dark times. Augustus Caesar (27 BCE-14 CE) refused to allow this, however, as he viewed the worship of Isis as a harmful Egyptian faith which would deteriorate Rome. The gods of Rome were thoroughly tied to the affairs of state, and Augustus felt motivating the worship of foreign gods would result in a breakdown of authority. He also just had a long-standing hatred for Cleopatra VII and all things Egyptian, which no doubt played a part in his decision.

Augustus' objections were ignored by his followers, though, and under the reign of Caligula (37-41 CE) the praise of Isis in Rome was strongly established by the emperor through the Isiac Festival in her honor. The temple referred to as the Iseum was constructed in the reign of Vespasian and Domitian built another to honor the female deity throughout his own reign. Hadrian was especially fond of Isis and embellished his mansion with scenes from her stories. A temple of Isis has been found in Pompeii, and another in Great Britain at the Roman site of Londinium (modern-day London). Other temples were built throughout the Roman Empire from Germania through Gaul, and Hispania, and throughout Asia Minor. The cult of Isis became so famous beyond ancient Egypt that, by the time Christianity was taking form, Isis was the pre-eminent godly being of Europe and the Mediterranean related to older goddesses just like Inanna/Ishtar, Aphrodite, and Sauska among others.

### Isis and Christianity

Isis controlled the religious perceptiveness of the people at the same time that Christianity was taking form or shape through the evangelical missions of St. Paul c. 42-62 CE. The actual idea of the Dying and Restoring God which had long been established through the Osiris myth was now made manifest in the figure of the child of God, Jesus the Christ. In time, epithets for Isis became those for the Virgin Mary like, for example, "Mother of God" and "Queen of Heaven" as the new faith drew on the power of the older faith to establish itself. The worship of Isis was the most stubborn of pagan faiths to match the new faith and continued longer than any other.

In 380 CE, the Roman emperor Theodosius I decreed that all pagan

temples be closed and pagan rites banned. The worship of Isis continued, however, and her temple at Philae in ancient Egypt remained open long after others had been shut down, damaged, dismantled for other projects, or turned into churches. Philae continued as an important site dedicated to Isis till the emperor Justinian closed it, in addition to other important centers of learning and praise (like, for example, the Academy of Plato), in 529 CE. Philae is considered the last of the pagan temples of the old world to have stood against the arise of Christianity and once it was closed the worship of Isis was completely eclipsed by the new religion. In the exact same way as Osiris, Isis, and Horus had filled in Amon, Mut, and Khons in Egypt, the trinity of the Dad, Child, and Holy Ghost changed the Abydos Triad as the supreme deities of a new religious understanding.

#### Chapter 9: Egyptian Medicine

Medical practice in age-old ancient Egypt was so advanced that tons of their observations, policies, and commonplace procedures would not be exceeded in the west for centuries after the fall of Rome and their practices would notify both Greek and Roman medicine. They comprehended that illness could be treated by pharmaceuticals, recognized the healing potential in massage and aromas, had male and female doctors who focused on particular regions, and comprehended the significance of tidiness in dealing with patients.

In the modern day it is acknowledged that disease and infection can be triggered by germs and one may think people have always actually believed so but this is a fairly late development in human understanding. It was not until the 19th century CE that the germ theory of disease was confirmed by Louis Pasteur and proven by the work of British surgeon Joseph Lister.

Right before either of them, the Hungarian physician Ignaz Semmelweis (1818-1865 CE) offered the then extravagant proposal to the medical community that they could cut mortality rates in their practices just by cleaning their hands. He was buffooned by medical professionals, who saw no reason to clean their hands right before even the most intrusive surgical procedures, and grew increasingly annoyed and bitter. Semmelweis was committed to a mental organization in 1865 CE where he died, after being severely beaten by guards, for suggesting a practice recognized as common sense today.

The age-old Egyptians would have accepted Semmelweis' proposition without hesitation; not because they understood the actual idea of germs, but as they valued cleanliness. The death rate following health procedures in old ancient Egypt was likely less than that of any European medical facility in the Christian era until the mid-20th century CE when personal tidiness and the sanitation of instruments became common practice.

Egyptologist Barbara Watterson notes that "medication in age-old ancient Egypt was fairly sophisticated and Egyptian doctors, who were all, with a couple of exceptions, male, were proficient. Nevertheless, for a society which regularly dissected the dead for embalming, physicians had little comprehension of how the majority of the inner organs worked and blamed illness on godlike forces.

### Injury & Disease

Injuries were easy to comprehend in age-old Egypt; disease was a bit harder. When a person was hurt there was a plain cause and an influence which could then be treated; when a person was ill, though, the cause was less clear and so diagnosis more troublesome.

The reason for illness was normally understood as the repercussion of sin and, when that appeared not the case, that the patient was under a demonic attack, was being pestered by an upset ghost, or that some deity felt they needed to learn a lesson. Disease, for this reason, was generally treated through recitation by a doctor of magic spells. Watterson notes, "the earliest 'doctor' was a magician, for the Egyptians believed that disease and illness were brought on by an evil force entering the body".

### Eye of Horus

The kinds of diseases Egyptians experienced were as many and differed as they're in the present day and included bilharsiasis (an illness contracted and spread through infected water); trachoma (an infection of the eye); malaria; dysentery; smallpox; pneumonia; cancer; heart problem; dementia; typhoid; arthritis; hypertension; bronchitis; tuberculosis; appendicitis; kidney stones; liver disease; curvature of the spine; the acute rhinitis, and ovarian cysts.

Besides magical spells, age-old Egyptians used necromancies, amulets, sacrifices, scents, tattoos, and statuary to either drive away

the ghost or satanic force, soothe the deity or gods who had sent the health problem, or conjure up protection from a greater power as a preventative. The spells and necromancies were made a note of on papyrus scrolls which became the health texts of the day.

### The Medical Texts

Although there were no doubt a lot more texts readily available in old Egypt, just a few have endured to the present. These few, though, provide a wealth of information on how the Egyptians saw disease and what they really believed would relieve a patient's symptoms or cause a treatment. They are named for the individual who owned them or the institution which houses them. All of them, to greater or lesser degrees, depend on supportive magic and also useful strategy.

#### Edwin Smith Papyrus

The Chester Beatty Medical Papyrus, outdated c. 1200 BCE, prescribes treatment for anorectal illness (issues associated with the rectum and rectum) and prescribes cannabis for cancer patients (pre-dating the reference of cannabis in Herodotus, long thought to be the earliest mention of the drug). The Berlin Medical Papyrus (also referred to as the Brugsch Papyrus, dated to the New Kingdom, c. 1570 - c. 1069 BCE) deals with birth control, fruitfulness, and consists of the earliest known pregnancy tests. The Ebers Papyrus (c. 1550 BCE) treats cancer (for which, it says, there's no treatment), heart problem, diabetes, contraception, and depression. The Edwin Smith Papyrus (c. 1600 BCE) is the oldest work on surgical techniques. The Demotic Magic Papyrus of London and Leiden (c. 3rd century CE) is devoted completely to magic spells and divination. The Hearst Medical Papyrus (dated to the New Kingdom) deals with urinary system infections and digestion issues. The Kahun Gynaecological Papyrus (c. 1800 BCE) handle actual ideaion and pregnancy issues as well as birth control. The London Medical Papyrus (c. 1782-1570 BCE) offers prescriptions for problems associated with the eyes, skin, burns, and pregnancy. These are only the papyrii acknowledged as focusing entirely on medicine. There are a lot more which touch on the subject but aren't usually accepted as health texts.

All of these works, at one time or another, were sought advice from by practicing medical professionals who regularly made house calls.

The Egyptians called the science of medication the "necessary art" for apparent reasons. Doctors were considered priests of the Per-Ankh, your home of Life, a sort of library/school connected to a temple, but the idea of the 'home of life' was also considered the healing knowledge of the individual physicians.

#### Doctors, Midwives, Nurses, & Dentists

Physicians in age-old ancient Egypt could be male or female. The "first physician", later idolized as a deity of medication and healing, was the designer Imhotep (c. 2667-2600 BCE) best known for developing the Step Pyramid of Djoser at Saqqara. Imhotep is also recalled for initiating "nonreligious medication" through his treatises arguing that illness occurred naturally and was not a punishment from the gods. Woman in the health profession in ancient Egypt go back to the Early Dynastic Period when Merit-Ptah was the royal court's chief physician c. 2700 BCE. Merit-Ptah is the first female medical professional known by name in world history but proof suggests a health school at the Temple of Neith in Sais in Lower ancient Egypt run by a woman whose name is unidentified c. 3000 BCE.

#### Knife & Leg Relief, Temple of Edfu

Pesehet (c. 2500 BCE), another female doctor generally mentioned as the first, was the "Lady Overseer of Female Physicians", perhaps related to the school at Sais, vouching for the presence of women in health practice at this time. The preferred legend of Agnodice of Athens (c. 4th century BCE) relates how, denied entrance to the medical occupation since she was lady, she went to ancient Egypt where women were respected in the field. How and where medical professionals got their training isn't understood though it has been developed there was an vital school in Alexandria and also the one at Sais.

A doctor not only needed to be literate but also pure in body and spirit. Medical professionals were referred to as wabau, ritually pure, and were expected to bathe as regularly and carefully as a high priest. Each physician had his or her speciality but there were also swnw, general practitioners, and sau, whose speciality was in the usage of magic. Midwives, masseurs, nurses, attendants, and seers also assisted the medical professional. Physicians aren't thought to have had anything to do with births, however, which

were managed completely by midwives and the lady of the houses. Egyptologist Carolyn Graves-Brown writes:

Midfemale spousery appears to have been an exclusively female occupation in old Egypt. That this was so is suggested by medical texts, that include gynaecological information, but don't discuss obstetrics. In addition, guys are never ever shown in birthing scenes, and in the Papyrus Westcar, the mom is helped in birth by 4 goddesses.

There is no evidence for medical training of midwives. In the Old Kingdom the word for 'midfemale spouse' is connected with the word for 'nurse', somebody who assisted a physician, but this association ends after that period. Midwives could be female loved ones, good friends, or next-door neighbors and do not appear to have been considered as medical professionals.

The nurse could be female or male and was a highly respected physician though, as with midwives, there is no evidence of a school or professional training. The most necessary kind of nurse was the wet nurse. Graves-Brown notes, "with the possible possibility of high death of moms, wet nurses would have been especially essential". Woman regularly died in giving birth and legal files show agreements between wet nurses and families to look after the newborn in the event of the mother's death. The dry nurse, who would help in treatments, was accorded such respect that he or she was represented during the time of the New Kingdom as linked with the godly. The association of the nurse with the doctor appears well established but not so much their relate to the dental professional.

Dentistry grew out of the established health profession but never ever developed as widely. The age-old Egyptians suffered from oral issues throughout the entire history of the society so why dental practitioners were not more numerous, or better documented, is unclear. Physicians also practiced dentistry but there were dentists as far back as the Early Dynastic Period. The first dental professional understood by name in the world, in reality, is Hesyre (c. 2600 BCE), Chief of Dentists and Physician to the King under the reign of Djoser (c. 2700 BCE). Dental issues were particularly prevalent owing to the Egyptian diet of coarse bread and their inability to keep sand out of their food. Egyptologist and historian Margaret Bunson writes:



Egyptians of all eras had dreadful teeth and peridontal problems. By the New Kingdom, though, oral decay was critical. Physicians loaded some teeth with honey and herbs, perhaps to stem infection or to ease strong pain. Some mummies were also provided with bridges and gold teeth. It isn't understood if these dental materials were used by the wearer while alive or inserted in the embalming process.

Queen Hatshepsut (1479-1458 BCE) of the New Kingdom died from an abscessed tooth as did lots of others. Toothaches and dental issues were thought to be caused by a tooth-worm which needed to be driven out by magical spells and necromancies. This faith no doubt originated in Mesopotamia, particularly Sumer, where incantations against the tooth-worm have been found in age-old cuneiform inscriptions.

### Recovering Gods, Medicines, & Implements

Just like medical professionals, dentists used magic necromancies to drive the tooth-worm from the patient and after that used what medicines they had to relieve the pain. Medical professionals and dental practitioners very often used herbs and spices medicinally. A treatment for persistent bad breath, for example, was chewing a gum ball of honey, cinnamon, myrrh, frankincense, and pignon. There is evidence of tooth extraction and incorrect teeth with opium used as an anaesthetic. The value of diet plan was acknowledged and changes in someone's diet plan for better health were suggested. Practical, hands-on, remedies were always used actually in cases of clear physical injury but with toothaches or gum illness, as with any disease, a supernatural cause was assumed.

### Egyptian Medical Instruments

A faith in magic was deeply ingrained in the Egyptian society and was considered as natural and typical as any other aspect of existence. The deity of magic was also a deity of medicine, Heka, who brought a staff braided with two serpents. This sign was passed on to the Greeks who associated it with their deity of healing, Asclepius, and which is recognizable today as the caduceus of the medical profession. While the caduceus no doubt took a trip from ancient Egypt to Greece it came from Sumer as the staff of Ninazu, child of the Sumerian female deity of healing Gula.

Besides Heka, there were a number of other important healing

godly beings like, for example, Sekhmet, Serket (also called Selket), Sobek, and Nefertum. The priests of Serket were all medical professionals, while not every doctor belonged to her cult. Serket and Sekhmet were regularly invoked in magic spells and incantations in addition to Heka and, in certain cases, other godly entities like, for example, Bes or Tawawret (generally dealing with fruitfulness/children's diseases). Sobek, the crocodile god, appears to have been largely conjured up for surgeries and invasive procedures. Nefertum, the deity of perfumes associated with the lotus and healing, was invoked in procedures which today would be recognized as aromatherapy. In the Kahun Papyrus a course routinely recommended for women is to fumigate them with incense to force out a fiend and Nefertum would have been called upon in these instances.

Together with spells and necromancies, the Egyptian physicians used naturally occurring herbs and spices and also their own productions. Bunson writes:

The pharmaceuticals of the old Egyptian priest-physicians included antacids, copper salts, turpentine, alum, astringents, alkaline laxatives, diuretics, sedatives, antispasmodics, calcium carbonates, and magnesia. They also employed tons of exotic herbs. All dispensing of medicines carefully stated in the medical papyri, with explicit instructions as to the precise dose, the manner in which the medicine was to be taken innerly (as with wine or food), and external applications.

Surgical procedures prevailed and lots of instruments have been identified which are still in use today. The Egyptians had a flint and a metal scalpel, dental pliers, a bone saw, probes, the catheter, clamps for stopping blood flow, specula, forceps, lancets for opening veins, sponges, scissors, phials, plasters of linen, and scales for weighing the proper amount of raw materials to blend for medications. Surgical treatments were regularly successful as evidenced by mummies and other remains found who made it through amputations and even brain surgical treatment for years. Prosthetic limbs, made usually of wood, have also been found.

Not all of the medical practices in ancient Egypt were so effective, however. Circumcision was a religious routine performed on boys

between the ages of 10 and 14 marking the transition from teenage years to manhood. It was performed by a medical professional who also served as a temple priest, using a flint blade and reciting incantations, but in spite of their preventative measures this process still at times resulted in infection. Since the nature of the infection was unidentified to them, it was considered the outcome of a transcendent influence and dealt with through magic spells; this more than likely resulted in the deaths of a lot of boys.

Because of their faith in the womb as connected to all parts of a woman's body, fumigation of the womb was a common prescription, accompanied by necromancies, which would miss the actual cause of the issue. Eye problems were treated with a dose of bat's blood because it was thought the night-vision of the bat would be transferred to the patient; no proof suggests this worked.

Although the embalmers of ancient Egypt no doubt came to comprehend how the organs they removed from the body worked with one another, this knowledge was never ever shown physicians. These 2 professions moved in entirely different spheres and what each did within their own job description was not actually considered appropriate to the other. It's for this reason that, while the Egyptians had the means of checking out internal medication, they never did.

The heart, while recognized as a pump, was also thought to be the center of feeling, personality, and intellect; the heart was preserved in the deceased while the brain was scraped out and disposed of as worthless. Even though they recognized liver disease they had no understanding of the function of the liver and while routinely dealing with miscarriages and infertility, had no understanding of obstetrics. The culture's reliance on super help from the deities prevented them from checking out more immediate and practical solutions to the health issues they came across daily.

Still, the Egyptian doctor was commonly respected for their skill and knowledge and was hired by the kings and nobility of other nations. The Greeks particularly appreciated the Egyptian medical profession and adopted a number of their faiths and methods. Later famous doctors of Rome and Greece - like Galen and Hippocrates ("father of modern medicine") - studied the Egyptian texts and symbols and so passed down the traditions to the present day.